

Goblin Kingdom

Arc 3: The Age Of Warlords

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Epub: [Trollo WN/LN EPUB](#)

Chapter 156: The Invasion of the Flatlands

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	92
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv68); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Year 213 of Germion Kingdom.

As the first month of the year, Mars, ended, the month of Bilf came. When Bilf was nearing its end,the soldiers assigned to patrol the forest in the night felt a change occur.

The forest was stirring.

They couldn’t tell exactly what was different, but there was something different. In the past, the forest felt harmless, but now, it was like a beast holding its breath.

The soldiers watched the forest for a while, but seeing that nothing was happening, they ended their patrols.

“We should probably report this just to be safe,” one of the soldiers said.

The patrols were being done in shift. After the soldiers on patrol informed the next patrol their finding, they went down the city walls and headed for a small

shed where they would await new orders.

It has been roughly 2 months since the colonial city has been built. At first, no one could sleep in fear of the monsters attacking at any moment, but humans were never one to worry for long.

In time, their anxiety loosened, and they got used to living in a fortress right next to the forest.

Around the watch fires, atop the castle walls, the soldiers sternly did their rounds. The night was the hour of the monsters.

With the favor of the god of fire did the humans try to see through the depths of Verna's (goddess of darkness) wings, but even the flames themselves weakened within the depths of the night god's bosom.

"Finally, we can sleep," a soldier said.

The soldier sprawled himself over his bed to sleep, but as soon as he did, the sound of alarms and people screaming reached his ears.

"Monsters! Hordes of them!"

The battering sound of alarm jolted the soldiers off their beds, prompting them to immediately head for the castle walls.

Their swift response was thanks to their daily drills.

Upon climbing the walls, what greeted them were hordes of monsters that extended as far as the eye could see.

Giant continental turtles that even adventurers would need several men to subjugate, monkeys that kidnapped people, foxes with thorn-like fur that hunted livestock. Various beasts of all sorts filled their eyes, but what was worse was that there were hordes of them.

That scene unfolding before their eyes was enough to break their common sense.

Within that great horde of beasts were goblins, most conspicuous of which were those equipped with bows.

The soldiers yelled. "Goblins! There are goblins among them!"

Gowen's subordinates have become extremely wary of goblins since the last battle. Part of that was because of Gowen's orders, but an even bigger reason was the stories told by the survivors of the previous battle.

Despite the darkness the soldiers managed to see the archer goblins and beast tamers.

"There are archers and beast tamers!" One of the soldiers cried.

Such a sight instilled fear into the soldiers, causing them to be panicked, but someone yelled at them from behind.

"Calm down! Follow the orders of your platoon commander and prepare to fight back! Those monsters can't cross the moat or climb the walls!" Yuan, who had been made responsible for the colonial city, said. "This is still within Master Gowen's predictions! Reinforcements are coming from the capital! Our duty is to lure the enemy and exhaust them!"

Yuan's voice reminded the soldiers of their roles. They looked at each other, and after realizing how foolish they were being, laughed, then they immediately carried out their jobs.

"This won't be like last year. This time we'll beat these monsters down!"

As the soldiers cheered, Yuan turned heel.

"Or, at least, I hope we do..." Yuan quietly muttered to himself before taking command.



Ra Gilmi Fishiga, who was given the order to surround the colonial city, groaned.

"The humans truly are powerful," he said.

The well lit moat was not a distance they could leap across. The depth was not something to scoff at either, being as deep as three goblins put atop each other with their arms stretched up.

"Doesn't seem like we can dig our way in either," Gilmi said.

He had considered having the killer ants and the Gi goblins dig a path, but

with a moat this deep, it wasn't feasible.

There was no other way to enter the colonial city other than the drawbridges, but there were only two of those. It was too dangerous an option while attacking.

In this operation, their current forces included the Ganra Tribe, Gi Gi Orudo's Beast Army, the araneae, the minotaurs, the tarpidae, the papirsag, the rizalat, and the orcs.

The Goblin King ordered them to take it easy and just threaten the enemy, but he didn't say not to attack either.

"The enemy will probably draw their bows..." The timid Bui said.

After the papirsag promised to make shields for them, Bui and his orcs took on the duty of carrying of the shield bearers.

"A fight between bows is exactly what I want," Gilmi bravely said.

He did not believe that the Ganra Tribe would lose out to the human archers in archery.

"Lord Gi Gi, please send the quicker ones of your horde to surround the fortress. Once we've put them on guard, send the beasts to the plains," Gilmi said.

"Very well. I wonder if there are any prey in the plains," Gi Gi said.

"Can the rizalat search for a water source nearby? We might be able to fill that dry moat with water," Gilmi said.

Tanita of the rizalat nodded. "So long as there's water, we can send my brethren."

"Exactly. I'll leave it in your hands," Gilmi said.

There's a lake inhabited by lizardmen not too far, so Gilmi figured he might be able to attack the fortress via water. The fact that Tanita was able to quickly deduce his thoughts showed that he too was an excellent commander.

"Understood," Tanita said.

"Lord Fanfan of the Tarpidae," Gilmi said.

“Fanfan is currently talking with someone,” Fanfan said.

She was currently talking via an unknown tongue with an ant.

Gilmi gave her a job.

“Tell the ants to fill up that moat,” Gilmi said.

Fanfan was currently the only one who could talk with the killer ants.

“Sure, as long as they get food. Oh, Fanfan too,” Fanfan said.

Gilmi nodded with a wry smile.

It was a mystery how well the killer ants who lived in the desert could live here, but their numbers and working force was certainly something to be prized. And while it wasn't possible to dig their way into the fortress, it was certainly possible to fill that moat with dirt.

Gilmi had the minotaurs and the other slow beasts wait at a designated location, then he decided to wait and see how things developed.

“This isn't like me. My heart is beating so fast,” Gilmi muttered.

Even he couldn't help his excitement.

He looked up at the night sky.

Gowen Ranid was in his manor when he received the report.

He has been in his office since coming back from training to ensure that all the plans tomorrow were good to go. It was then that some soldiers appeared before him, panicked.

“The signal fire from the colonial city has been lit! It’s red! The monsters are attacking!”

Gowen was in the middle of his lunch when they entered. He cut the bread on his plate, dipped it in his soup, and then he took a bite out of it.

“Details?” Gowen asked as he pushed away the thoughts of panic from the monsters coming too early.

“W-We don’t have any information as of the moment! But...” One of the soldiers said.

“Then send some scouts and prepare to send a messenger to the capital,” Gowen said. “The north and the south too.”

“Yes, sir!” The soldier said.

“Oh, and the guild too. We’ll be paying handsomely, so tell them to send their best,” Gowen said.

“The Adventurers Guild, sir?” The soldier confirmed.

“Yes. Anything else?” Gowen asked.

Seeing the soldier dumbfounded, Gowen said. “Don’t worry. Even if a horde of monster attacks, the colonial city won’t fall so easily. We have more than enough time to have our lunch.”

“Yes, sir!”

Satisfied that the soldier had finally calmed down, Gowen finished the bread in his hands and hurriedly concluded his lunch, then he gathered the soldiers of the west.

“To think on top of the southern heretic revolt we would have to deal with the monsters. I don’t think they intentionally aimed for this timing, but...”

The reinforcements from the south will be lessened.

The south was too unstable for the capital to easily send reinforcements. He would ask Gulland for help, but the barbarians have started moving in the north again.

“So the time of tribulation has come, has it?” Gowen muttered.

Currently, his forces had 800 footmen, 200 cavalry, and 100 archers. On top of that, he also had the new weapons, the chariots, from the east beyond the Eastern Holy Shushunu Kingdom.

The engineers mentioned they had to test the chariots in live combat. The chariot unit’s training hasn’t been completed yet, however, so Gowen wasn’t sure how effective they would be, but as far as mobility went, they were unequaled.

They had less cavalry as a result, but since Corseo’s passing, no one has really managed to win the cavalry over anyway.

Gowen lifted his head and pushed away the needless worries.

“We have to win,” Gowen said.

Since they’re coming out to the flatlands, they have some advantages. This time they’ll be the ones to trample them as they try to surround the colonial city.

As Gowen resolved himself, he began his preparations.



As Gilmi led the detached force under his command to surround the colonial city, the main force led by the Goblin King took a large detour through the north before going to the flatlands.

As the sun set, the harpies, who traversed the skies, and Gi Ji Arsil’s unit, who traveled on ground, moved to scout the enemy.

In the position of the vanguard was the Goblin King’s subordinate with the biggest army, Gi Gu Verbena.

His duty was to gather information on the surrounding area, search a safe route, and move his army accordingly.

One of the harpies flying in the sky cried a high-pitched sound as she descended to where Gi Gu was. As a duke class goblin, Gi Gu's muscular body was a size bigger than everyone else's.

"Reporting," the harpy said.

As Gi Gu raised his head, the harpy flying at a low altitude behind him casually reported.

"There is a human village northwest half a day's distance away. Size: slightly big," the harpy reported.

"Slightly? That's not very specific. Enemy number?" Gi Gu asked.

"Don't know~" The harpy laughed, then she flew back to the sky.

Nuu, Gi Gu groaned, then he turned to his subordinates and gave an order.

"Contact Gi Ji and have him confirm the harpies' intel," Gi Gu said.

After ordering one rare class goblin, he sent another rare class goblin.

"Inform the king that we've spotted a human village. We're currently investigating it. Direction: Northwest. Distance: Half a day. Go!" Gi Gu said.

The rare class goblin mumbled to himself Gi Gu's orders, then he bolted off for the king.

Gi Gu had a lot of goblins under him, so he could afford to use the precious rare goblins as messengers.

The battle with the killer ants made Gi Gu realize just how difficult it was to communicate during wartime. Normal class goblins can't deal with unexpected situations and are too dumb to memorize long messages, so the minimum class for messengers had to be rare class. The lack of a more satisfactory solution made Gi Gu groan.

Using the rare class for such tasks meant that their battle prowess would dwindle.

"I know it's the king's orders, but this is really going to be difficult," Gi Gu complained to himself.

The king had ordered them to capture the human villages without killing any

humans. That was a tall order for the goblins who knew nothing but war.

Gi Gu had to ensure that his subordinates understood their mission.

The Goblin King gave that order after considering the post-war issues, but Gi Gu did not understand that. As far as he was concerned, the king asked them to occupy the villages to execute surprise attacks.

“It would be faster if we just killed them all,” Gi Gu muttered.

In that case, wiping out all the humans to seal their lips would be ideal. But despite worrying endlessly, Gi Gu convinced himself that he had to obey the king’s orders. Gi Gu hurried on with his army.

His objective was the western city. He would take the humans by surprise and take the head of their boss.

Until then he had to move carefully.

“Hurry!”

Gi Gu ran to the village with 40 rare goblins, while the main force ran to the east. Even as the twin moons, Ervi and Navi, dyed the flatlands in their light, the demon children of chaos (goblins) army showed no signs of stopping.



Gi Gu’s messenger arrived at the rear guard the Goblin King led. It was already night by the time he arrived.

“A village, huh. We should drop by,” the king said.

The Goblin King immediately made up his mind and left the task to Gi Ga Rax, who then bolted off with his black tiger.

The Goblin King had borrowed 10 iron legs from the Paradua reserve forces, so he decided to have Shumea and Fei ride with them.

“Shumea, Fei, you’re coming with us,” the king said.

The spearwoman blessed by the god of flames and the elven officer and warrior looked at each other, puzzled.

“I’m going to declare an edict in the occupied village. You are to ensure that the villagers fully understand what I’ve said,” the Goblin King said.

“W-Wait a moment, Boss! That’s impossible for me!” Shumea complained.

“I’m not taking no for an answer. You’ve rested plenty, and now, I’m going to work you sick,” the Goblin King said.

“But Boss...” Shumea complained.

She looked pitiful, almost like she was about to cry at any moment, but the king ignored her and asked the messenger the directions of the village.

“Hurry,” the king implored with a cool face.

Fei immediately got up one of the black tigers and sat behind a Paradua goblin.

“Uu~, damn it! If a girl has guts! She can do anything!” Shumea said as she thrust her spear into the innocent land before jumping onto one of the black tigers.

“Ready? Let’s go!” The Goblin King said.

The Goblin King ran alongside the 10 black tigers. It was a pity but there weren’t many beasts who could carry someone of a king class’s stature.

Of the black tigers, the only one who could would be the old chief, Aluhaliha’s, jirouou. But even if jirouou could, he wouldn’t live long if he had to carry the king for a long time.

Fortunately, with the king’s superior body, he could move quickly even without a mount.

After a while, the human village came to view. There were several goblins outside. They were probably Gi Gu’s people.

The king was relieved to see that they were able to safely occupy the village. He heaved a sigh of relief as he entered the village.

Gi Gu’s subordinate goblins were from the south. They had long arms and specialized in climbing trees. When they saw the king, they prostrated themselves before him almost as if they were facing a god.

A rare class goblin platoon commander greeted the king.

“Your Majesty, to think you would come here personally,” he said.

The Goblin King nodded and had the village chief summoned.

There was a plaza at the center of the village, where a stump just big enough for the king to seat on was. The king sat himself comfly on that stump and struck zweihander into the ground.

The pressure emanating from him was heavy enough to make even the stern officials of the capital run away barefooted, so it was only natural that Shumea would feel pity for the chief.

“I kind of feel bad for them,” Shumea remarked.

“We’re not killing them, though. If anything I’d say we’re being kind?” Fei said, causing Shumea’s face to turn bitter.

“Your Majesty, I present to you the village chief,” the rare class goblin said as he presented the pale and shivering old chief to the king.

“Thank you,” the king said.

The Goblin King stared at the old village chief.

He wondered to himself how he could convince these people he meant no harm. After all, even old adventurers would want to run away upon seeing him. The pressure he emanated was simply that great.

True enough the old village chief couldn’t stop shivering just standing before him.

To the old village chief, the Goblin King looked like the sort who could speak only two words: ‘kill everyone’.

The old village chief desperately held on to his flickering consciousness. If he let his guard down for even a moment, he knew he would faint. He had little grandchildren left in the village. At the very least, he had to find a way to save them.

It was only a moment, but it felt like an eternity before the king finally opened his mouth.

He went straight to the point as usual.

“We will be taking control of this village,” the Goblin King said.

When Shumea heard the king's low-pitched voice, she looked up to the sky.

"That had the opposite effect, Boss," she quietly remarked.

Only Fei reacted to her. He raised up one of his brows as he quietly watched the Goblin King and the human converse.

"Y-Yes..." The chief weakly said.

The Goblin King continued. "So long as you don't rebel against us, we won't hurt you, so just shut up and live."

As far as the Goblin King was concerned, there was no problem so long as this village had no ways of communicating with the west.

Though he would have to wait until the true leader of this place, the enemy commander Gowen Ranid, was gone before he could assume full control.

"W-We won't s-say any-anything! I-I swear!" The village chief said.

"You keep that promise, it's the one thing keeping lives. I'll leave you some people to ensure things go smoothly. Dismissed," the king said.

As the Goblin King stood, he took zweihander back from the ground and sheathed it by his waist.

The village chief fell on his buttocks when the Goblin King did that, but he ignored him and passed by Shumea and Fei.

"There's no reason for needless battles. If anyone gets in the way, remove them. We can demand taxes later," the Goblin King said.

"As you command," Fei said.

"Well, we'll manage somehow," Shumea said.

"I'll be going ahead. Make sure the villagers understand my policies perfectly, then 2 days later come after me," the Goblin King said.

Fei quietly nodded and Shumea heaved a sigh of relief. Before the king left he asked the rare class goblin platoon commander to work with Shumea and Fei.

"What will we be doing?" The goblin asked.

Shumea heaved a sigh of relief as she looked at the chief, who was still sitting

on his buttocks, dazed.

“I think we can start by bringing an old man’s soul back,” she said.

This is going to be a long 2 days, she thought.

TI’s Note: I’ve added the map below. That’s the map provided at the end of Volume 2. I have difficulty reading handwritten kanji and the image is really blurry, so just let me know if you find anything amiss.



Legend:

(Note: If you see anything amiss, please let me know. I couldn’t read some kanji because of the image quality and the handwriting.)

- 1. Unexplored Forest of Darkness land.
- 2. Sylph HQ
- 3. Unexplored Forest of Darkness Land
- 4. Demihuman HQ
- 5. Gi Zu’s Territory
- 6. Fortress of the Abyss
- 7. Gi Gu Verbena’s Territory
- 8. Gi Gi’s Territory
- 9. Orc HQ
- 10. New Orc HQ

Red text. Gi Go's Travel Route

Chapter 157: Siege

After the month of Bilf, came the month of Toura. The light of spring fell upon the colonial city that was about to be engulfed by war.

Ra Gilmi Fishiga and his soldiers concentrated on carrying out various tasks as they tried to fill the moat.

“Fire!”

At Gilmi’s behest, the goblins of Ganra let loose their bows, and countless arrows shot over the walls of colonia, giving rise to many screams.

They knew that a powerful counterattack would come right after, so...

“Retreat!”

Without even checking how much damage they’ve dealt, they ran back to an area near the forest. As soon as they did, an arrow as big as one’s arm landed in the place they were standing at before.

“Damn, are the humans raising a giant?” Gilmi spat.

Gilmi had a platoon meant for sieging the colonial city, but the powerful attacks of the enemy kept them from putting their plans into action.

This was the goblins’ first time sieging an enemy city. No matter how hard they racked their heads to find a way to siege the colonial city (colonia) while limiting casualties, they couldn’t think of anything.

Even Gilmi himself who believed that the archers of Ganra wouldn’t lose out to the human archers cowered before their giant arrows.

As a result, they have been fighting the humans like the waves of the sea, coming and going.

While they fought, the orcs would take their shields and run for the moats, and they would try to fill them up.

“Support the retreating orcs! Proud goblins of Ganra, don’t let these orcs

prove themselves braver than us!” Gilmi said.

It was rare for him to say so much, but he needed to to encourage his soldiers.

As soon as he gave that command, the goblins of Ganra hiding in between the trees, crawled out and shot their bows at the humans.

Gilmi stood at the frontline to manage the horde that was made up of half their tribe.

“Fire!” Gilmi said.

The arrows flew above the walls once more.

“Over there! Run!” Gilmi said.

The goblins ran the opposite direction that the orcs did.

As they dodged the incoming arrows, Gilmi gave another order.

“Bows at the ready!” Gilmi said.

When everyone had nocked their arrows, Gilmi immediately gave his next order.

“Stop! Shoot!” Gilmi said.

After those two simple orders, Gilmi and his soldiers ran back to the forest.

When they got back to the forest, Fanfan of the tarpidae called out to him.

“The ants have a problem,” Fanfan said.

Apparently, the killer ants tried to dig a hole to fill the moat, but they ended up hitting a barrier that kept them from moving any further.

“Are the humans that meticulous?” Gilmi asked.

“Fanfan doesn’t know. They felt like something made by a god.” Fanfan said.

“Hmm...” Gilmi became thoughtful.

—Does this have something to do with the unencroachable area dictated by the gods? Did the humans accidentally build their fortress on top of it?

Gilmi wasn’t sure, but if the killer ants can’t get through, then that’s that.

“Got it. Thank the killer ants for us,” Gilmi said.

For the meantime, Gilmi decided to promise them food and rest, then he went to meet Bui.

“I’ve thrown the logs just like you told me too, but we just can’t seem to fill those things,” Bui said.

“Did you suffer any casualties?” Gilmi asked.

“We have about 3 wounded,” Bui said.

“That’s good then,” Gilmi said.

“Those giant arrows are a problem,” Bui said.

“Indeed, and here I thought we’d win for sure in a contest of archery,” Gilmi said.

Seeing Gilmi crying sour grapes, Bui couldn’t help but raise his brows in his anxiety.

“How about using the lizardman?” Bui asked.

“There’s water underground, but we can’t quite figure out how to get it to flow into the moat,” Gilmi said.

It wasn’t easy for the lizardman, who normally lived by the river, to go underground.

There was no way for them to reach that water source either.

As Gilmi sighed and Bui quietly listened, the latter came up with an idea.

“Then how about this?” Bui said.

After Gilmi listened to Bui’s proposition, he decided to stop the attacks during the day.



On the side of the humans, who were under attack by the goblins, Yuan and his men defended the village as they waited for Gowen’s reinforcements.

“How are the ballistae doing?” Yuan asked.

“There are currently no problems, sir!” The young soldier replied.

Commanders like Yuan always had to act dignified lest they wished to make their soldiers anxious.

As someone who had studied under Gowen himself, Yuan did his best to stifle his own worries and act like a dignified commander.

“Keep up the good work. Those monsters won’t cower just from something like this,” Yuan said.

“Understood!” The young soldier happily replied, and Yuan nodded.

Yuan’s attention was focused on the distant west. They have been successfully defending against the goblin attacks thanks to the defensive weapons of the fortress, and the moats – despite having been slightly filled – were still alright, but it was curious whether they would be able to say the same in the hour of the night god.

The darkness belonged to the monsters.

Of course, Yuan had come up with a countermeasure himself.

For one, he’s hired the adventurers staying at the colonial city for a long time and promised them a handsome reward. It was for that reason that he had them wield one part of the defensive weapons.

Having been designed to defend for perpetuity, the colonial city comes outfitted with bountiful fields.

The emergency reserves should hold even half a year later.

The knights, the soldiers, the farmers and tenant farmers all currently had high morale.

But even then...

Yuan gripped the hilt of his sword tight.

The memories of that night when that monster-like king of goblins sent him flying just won’t leave.

Did I overlook something? Is everything really alright?

Yuan could not rid himself of his worries, so despite it being his free time, he could not help but inspect the defensive weapons, the farms, and various other

places.

“Nothing seems amiss,” Yuan said to himself.

But although Yuan had checked for himself that nothing was amiss, when he went to the streets, his anxiety still weighed heavily on his shoulders.

“Hey, mister,” a voice said to him.

That voice belonged to a fearfully beautiful young girl with black hair that extended down to her waist. There was a faint blush on her porcelain-like cheeks, and her red tongue could be seen peeking out of her thin lips.

Her most striking feature, however, was none of these but her red eyes.

The girl was dressed in nothing more than rags, but for some reason, there was an aura of nobility about her. It was enough to make Yuan want to kneel.

Who knew there was a girl like this in the colonial city?

“A-Ahh,” Yuan caught himself saying.

“Shall I rid you of your worries?” The girl said.

That haughtiness that was completely unlike how she was dressed and that soothing voice of hers made Yuan instinctively nod.

He could not even respond properly.

The young girl sweetly smiled, then as she closed her eyes, she muttered something.

When she opened her eyes again, she smiled with her mouth alone at Yuan.

“Don’t worry. You won’t die. At least, not here,” she said.

“What do you mean?” Yuan asked.

“Who knows?” The girl said.

As she sweetly smiled at him one last time, she turned around. It was almost as if she hadn’t been talking to Yuan at all.

“W-Wait a moment,” Yuan called out to her.

He tried to chase after her, but a wind blew at him, keeping him from going any further. By the time the breeze had gone, the girl was nowhere to be seen.

“W-What just happened?” Yuan asked to himself.

He was so dumbfounded by what had transpired that he stood still in that same spot, looking blankly toward the direction the girl had vanished until the sun set.

Gowen sent a request for reinforcements to the north, the south, and the capital even deeper west. The north and the capital immediately replied, but the south's response was yet to arrive.

As Gowen readied the army at the west, he wondered what could possibly be keeping the south.

Ripper Knight, Sivara, and Sharp-Eyed Knight, Jize, were in charge of the south. Moreover, the boundaries to the east where the Holy Shushunu Kingdom was was safe. If so, then...

“Could the heretics have made a move?”

If there was one problem that the south might have it would be the adherents of the Kushain faith.

“Could the southern rebellion be making their way here?”

Gowen's predictions were half right and half wrong. The Ripper Knight and the Sharp-Eyed Knight were indeed at a loss on how to deal with the Kushain believers, but with their strength and the southern army, they were more than strong enough to swiftly eliminate the threat.

Unfortunately, they couldn't do so because of the people coming from the back. Among those were people who ran with only their clothes, merchants who took their wealth with them, and mothers who took only their babes... It was such a group that was currently making their way to the colonial city.

Such a group of people couldn't possibly be killed, so the Ripper Knight and the Sharp-Eyed Knight were unsure of how to deal with the situation.

Unfortunately, Gowen had no way of knowing that.

All he knew was that he couldn't expect reinforcements from the south.

“Regardless, even without them, we will still have 400 soldiers from the capital and 350 from the north.”

The army under the direct control of King Ashtal were inexperienced, but after having analyzed the new potions, Gowen decided he could safely leave the supplies and wounded to them.

The army coming from the north were under the lead of Gulland. Contrast the reinforcements from the capitals, the northern reinforcements were experienced in war. They're wild and crude, but their strength was first rate.

There was 3 days to go until the reinforcements would arrive.

Until then Gowen needed to gather his scattered forces and ready his army.

"Our defeat last year... I won't let you forget it," Gowen muttered.

Gowen had originally planned to rebuild his forces in two years, but the monsters only gave him one.

Now, he has no choice but to train his soldiers during the war.



"Lord Gi Go."

In the northern region where cold winds blew, in the village of the barbaric sword tribe renowned as yugushiva (snow demon), was a young maiden kneeling.

She called out to the sleeping goblin who had his hands on the curved sword that he carried on his back.

"Lord Gi Go, are you awake?" Yustia asked.

"Yes," Gi Go said as he tried to sit with the curved sword in his embrace.

"Everyone is, gathered. They want to see, their supreme commander," Yustia said.

"Hmm... So I'm the supreme commander, huh," Gi Go said.

Gi Go found it puzzling, after all did he not decide to live solely for the sword? He was not a goblin meant to lead others in the first place, so why was he the supreme commander all of the sudden?

"This really doesn't suit me," Gi Go complained.

Yustia had a look of doubt on her face as Gi Go stood up, but Gi Go just smiled at her, then he lifted up the curtains of the tent and walked outside.

The blinding light of the god of fire's body made Gi Go knit his brows. The

land covered in white didn't help either, as it reflected the blinding light, burning Gi Go's poor eyes alongside the god of fire's body.

But that only lasted a few seconds.

Before Gi Go's eyes were the various yugushiva tribes gathered.

Every one of them had the mask of a demon on, but Gi Go knew that the moment they saw him, they all gulped.

The various yugushiva tribes had been gathered once more with Yustia at the center.

Most of the men had already died in the previous wars, but with a threat looming upon them, they had no choice but to rally their forces once more.

Them being able to stand again was thanks to Yustia's overwhelming support.

With her masterful sword arts and her beautiful face, she quickly became the genius yugushiva swordsman that became the pillar of the yugushiva tribes.

—Our chief is loved by the heavens!

The young boys and girls that made up the yugushiva tribe believed in Yustia so much that it was almost religious. It was that faith that lit a fire in their hearts.

When Yustia appeared beside Gi go, the yugushiva people cheered.

Yustia told them to keep quiet in the northern tongue, then she spoke to Gi Go.

"Lord Gi Go, I will translate, so please," she said.

Hmm, Gi Go groaned as he looked at the yugushiva people once more.

They might call him 'supreme commander', but their hearts were with Yustia.

Why does he have to say anything? Gi Go wondered.

"This war belongs to you," Gi Go said.

Yustia's gaze remained unmoving toward the crowd even as she translated.

"So take back with your own hands the pride and glory of your ancestors that was taken!"

Silence covered the snow-blanketed lands.

“The time has come to seek the flag of your true master!!”

As Gi Go raised up his curved sword, cheers echoed throughout the yugushiva tribes.

Gi Go turned around and withdrew behind Yustia.

As Yustia gave her orders, the yugushiva tribes moved out.

Like this the snow-blanketed lands of the north were caught in the flames of war once more.

Chapter 158: Confrontation

Inside the colonial city that watched over the mountains of the snow god was a fuming Gulland.

“Burn those barbarians!” Gulland yelled.

Not only did Gowen request for reinforcements to defend the west, the yugushiva barbarians that should have already been chased away suddenly started moving again.

Moreover, this time they weren’t challenging them to a straight-up battle and were instead attacking their patrols and merchants with small groups.

The defense of the northern colonial city was solid, and even if 1,000 or 2,000 yugushiva barbarians attacked, so long as Gulland was healthy, he would be able to deal with them.

But Gulland was only one person.

No matter how powerful he was, even he would be forced to sacrifice one side when two places are attacked at the same time.

Gulland was furious. They were incurring more and more casualties by the moment, but even if he tried and led a small platoon to chase after the barbarians, they would only turn around and run, almost as if they were mocking him.

Honestly, Gulland would rather not send reinforcements to the west now, but he owed Gowen.

“If their fighting style has changed, then that must mean they’ve started to learn,” Gulland’s adjutant said, but upon seeing him angry, even he couldn’t help but cower out of fear that he might only add oil to the flames.

In the end, it was the holy knight, Lili, who gave a calm analysis of the battle.

“...What an annoying bunch. Did they change leaders or something?” Gulland asked in the office to no one in particular.

The people gathered in the office were the leaders of the army. They knew that Gulland had only said that out loud to help himself gather his thoughts, so no one answered.

Gulland's eyes were closed as he became thoughtful, then all of the sudden, 'KA'! Gulland slammed his hand on the table.

"We're sending reinforcements to the west. 500 men. I will lead them. As for the defense here... Lili, I'll leave it to you," Gulland said.

When the gathered people heard how big of a force Gulland was planning to take, they couldn't help but open their eyes wide in astonishment.

"...General, if you send that many, what about our—" Gulland's adjutant tried to argue, but when he saw Gulland click his tongue, he folded.

"That will be all. Lili, I leave it to you," Gulland said, turning heel as he left the room.

After that, silence filled the office.

"...Lord Lili, do you have a plan?" The adjutant asked to continue the meeting.

Lili nodded. "I do, but it will take patience and endurance to execute it. Is there anyone in this fortress who can do that?"

Lili looked over the gathered generals and sighed.

The soldiers gathered in the north were mostly ruffians, and Gulland had taken most of them with him to the west.

"...I see. So that's how it is," Lili said.

Lili pondered on Gulland's true intentions. Gulland had taken the greater majority of the ruffian-like soldiers.

That being the case, the soldiers left behind were mostly docile. Gulland's preferred soldier was the rough sort that neither cared about theirs nor other people's life.

With most of those soldiers gone, Lili was free to move as she pleased. Apparently, Gulland had intended for her to deal with the relatively docile soldiers herself.

“Can’t tell if he’s just not honest, or if this whole thing is just a coincidence,” Lili chuckled.

“There’s no other way to it! Everyone, listen up!” Lili said in a loud voice.

As Lili put on the aura of a leader, the gathered generals saw her in a new light.



The main force that the Goblin King led moved in the night. They stationed some goblins in the occupied villages they came across and left Shumea and the elves to handle them.

The Goblin King and his forces would make camp in the small forests to rest during the day.

They would either eat the beasts they caught along the plains or the preserved food they’d brought with them. The food didn’t really fill their stomachs, but no one uttered a word of complaint.

After all, the Goblin King himself endured the simple diet, and the various goblin commanders would go around during break time to talk to the soldiers.

On the third day, report of Gi Gu Verbena meeting the enemy finally came.

“Great Brother has made contact with enemy. Loss, one normal class. We caught the enemy,” the rare class goblin reported with some difficulty.

The Goblin King knit his brows. “How many enemies?”

“About 10. They have all been caught,” the rare class goblin replied.

“Hmm...”

The Goblin King folded his arms and looked up to the sky as he became thoughtful, but that only lasted for a few seconds before he made his decision.

“I shall meet them,” the Goblin King said.

In response, the rare class goblin bowed and turned heel.

The duty of a messenger was to contact the king, and then return to Gi Gu Verbena’s ‘Wolf Pack’.

What the king was wondering about was whether the soldiers caught were actually a part of the official army or if they were merely adventurers.

If they were a part of the official army, their absence might alert the enemy.

If the enemy were to send a search squad to investigate, it would become difficult to execute the surprise attack.

On the other hand, if the captured 'soldiers' were merely adventurers, then there wasn't much to worry about. It was doubtful that the guild or the army would bother to watch them too closely.

If there was anything to worry about it would be the number. 10 people. That was not a small number.

More people meant more connections. If those connections were to worry, they might end up alerting the enemy.

That being said, the Goblin King had no intentions of rebuking Gi Gu's decision. If anything, the king believed that Gi Gu ought to be praised.

The army Gi Gu was leading numbered almost 500 goblins. Normally, a party of 10 people wouldn't bother to attack an army of that size. They would normally try to run.

The fact that Gi Gu was able to capture them meant that he had either managed to hide his army well or that he made his move quick enough that they were unable to react. Whatever the reason, Gi Gu was undoubtedly a skilled commander.

"Your Majesty, it would take too long to interrogate the humans one by one," Gi Za said unreservedly.

"I see where you're coming from, but we need to ensure that there's no falsehood to their words. The wrong information could very easily lead us to our deaths. This is enemy territory. We have to be careful," the Goblin King said.

"In that case, we should send a messenger to ask Lord Gi Gu Verbena to slow down," Gi Za suggested.

Gi Za feared that the enemy might be alerted to our presence while Gi Gu's

forces were too far from ours. A battle under such circumstances would be nothing short of disastrous.

Of course, the king had taken that into consideration already, so he explained his thoughts as well as the importance of information to Gi Za.

The current distance between Gi Gu's wolf pack and the king's main forces was about a whole day. As for whether that was close or far was something the inexperienced goblins did not know yet.

"Gi Gu should be able to handle the enemy even if they do meet. I don't want to trouble him by giving him too many orders," the Goblin King said.

"In that case, it can't be helped..." Gi Za said.

Gi Za could not help but think less of himself as he felt how much the king trusted Gi Gu.

"Hmm... How about increasing our pace a little?" Gi Za suggested.

The Goblin King wryly smiled. "That would certainly allow us to maintain our distance, and we'll be able to meet those captives quicker."

Gi Za nodded, and then the king made his decision. "Very well! Send an order to the various units! We will be running at the speed of the wind!"

The Goblin King had thought up various ideas in regards to army movement.

One of those things was uniform movement. When the king said 'Speed of the Wind', that meant that the army needed to match the speed of the Paradua riders. It was a pace that prioritized speed; a pace at which, the normal goblins could barely catch up.

Of course, the Goblin King would have to slow down to watch the surroundings from time to time, but Gi Gu Verbena was leading the advance force for them, so there wasn't much to worry about.

"Gi Ga," the king called out.

"Yes, my liege," Gi Ga replied.

Gi Ga Rax, the knight class goblin who rode on one of Paradua's beasts, he was the king's oldest and most loyal retainer.

“Have the imperial guards chase after the Paradua. Work with the raid groups of the centaurs and the werewolves to pick up the fallen,” the Goblin King said.

“As you command!” Gi Ga replied.

“Then have Gi Jii Yubu follow after the imperial guards, and then the Gaidga after Gi Jii.”

As the king gave his orders, the various commanders scattered.

“Trample upon the earth and tear through the winds, men! Onwards!”

At the king’s behest, the goblin coalition moved in the night like the gust of the wind.

The feudal lord of the west, Gowen Ranid, moved out with his army. With the reinforcements from the capital, their forces numbered 1700 men strong. They had a lot more soldiers than Gowen expected. As for why, that was because the soldiers that fought under Gowen in the past came as volunteer soldiers.

Gowen's army currently had 1,000 foot soldiers, 100 archers, 200 cavalry, and 100 chariots. The reinforcements from the capital added 100 mages and 200 light infantry.

The reinforcements from the north and south were yet to arrive, but Gowen has already decided to begin the battle without them.

One reason that led to that was the problem of food supply. The western city did not have enough food to feed this many soldiers, only the colonial city could. The colonial city was made especially to hold during a siege, so it was made with bountiful fields.

Good food could support the morale when under siege.

Another reason was because of the issues of the western city's design.

The western city was made for the purpose of managing the western region. It was not built to accommodate an army. Hence, it did not have the luxury of accepting an extra 1,700 people.

Without any room to sleep, the soldiers would have no choice but to make camp and sleep outside.

They would do so while looking on at the warm city from their cold camp. Naturally, that would cause displeasure among the soldiers.

Gowen decided it would be counterproductive to have the soldiers pile up such feelings before the war, so he decided to move out even though the reinforcements had yet to arrive.

"The cavalry will lead and act as the scouts. The middle guard will be taken by the foot soldiers, and the rear will be taken by the chariots. At the rearmost will be the reinforcements from the capital," Gowen said in the meeting with the various platoon commanders.

“Is everyone aware of the current situation?” Gowen asked.

The platoon commanders nodded.

Gowen continued. “Our objective is the rescue of the colonial city and the annihilation of the goblins. Once we’ve entered the colonial city, we will then make our way into the forest,” Gowen said.

“We’re entering the forest again?” A commander asked.

“Yes, otherwise, we’d be putting this big army to waste,” Gowen said without the slightest flicker in his emotions.

“But the soldiers are still afraid of that forest,” the commander said.

“Of course, we will only enter if we manage to wipe out the goblins,” Gowen said.

After settling the commander’s worry, Gowen proceeded to give a logical explanation of their attack route and logistics. Even the magicians from the capital couldn’t help but admire Gowen’s leadership.

In one sense, war could be said to be a competition of resources.

Though magic, skill, and the blessed champions of the gods who could slay a thousand alone existed, they were not the only factors that decided victory. There were so-called preparations to war, such as controlling the land, securing supply lines, and even setting up traps. And even after the war begins, there were many things that needed to be done that a hero could not do so by himself, like searching for the enemy or pursuing them.

Heroes are rare so they often get the spotlight, but the only one in Germion Kingdom who could plan to this extent was Gowen Ranid.

No matter how powerful an individual might be, in the end, what will decide the war is number.

It was a simple but logical path to power.

The iron-armed knight incorporated that into his strategies.

“But isn’t the forest their territory? Wouldn’t it be too dangerous?” A platoon commander asked.

“I see where you’re coming from, but it would be best for you to forget the forest being dangerous,” Gowen said.

Gowen turned to the mage in the room. “It’s possible, right? To use a lot of earth and fire mages?”

The mage nodded.

Gowen continued. “Besides, we have our colonial city. We’d be throwing our advantage if we don’t use it.”

Gowen showed a blue picture, on it was depicted plans to use the lumber from the forest to strengthen the colonial city. Stealing the strength of the forest was the same as weakening the goblins.

In contrast, they would be strengthening the defense of the colonial city, gradually increasing the strength of their forces.

Gowen’s plan did not end there, however, for after one plan came another. It was like a puzzle.

When the platoon commanders heard his plan, their expressions turned to that of confidence.

Gowen looked at them with satisfaction.

“We don’t need a hero in this war. We will grasp victory with our own strength. That is what I intend, so prepare yourselves, men,” Gowen said.

As the platoon leaders left, Gowen took a deep sigh.

“...A hero isn’t needed, huh. But the very reason heroes are heroes is because they are able to overturn the basic concept of strength in numbers.”

No matter how meticulous one tried to weave his plans, there would definitely be an inconsistency somewhere.

“But at the very least, I won’t lose to the likes of goblins.”

With resolve burning in his eyes, Gowen left his room.

The reinforcements Gowen led met the goblins two days later.

Chapter 159: Maneuvering

Of the holy knights of Germion Kingdom, the ones watching over the south were the Ripper Knight, Sivara, and the Sharp-Eyed Knight, Jize. They have been working together to avoid the Kushain believers as they accepted the refugees.

“We’ve finally secured the refugees. What are we going to do with all these documents? Jize, my stomach hurts, so—” Sivara said.

“Don’t worry. I know full well that despite what your mouth says, you’re actually a great man who can get things done,” Jize said.

“Umm, ok, but can you not say that while pointing your sword at my neck. What are you going to do if I die?” Sivara asked.

“Please, Lord Sivara, something of this level couldn’t possibly touch you. Here, look!” Jize said as he thrust his sword into Sivara’s neck.

The sword thrust swiftly, but Sivara reflexively dodged it by a hair’s breadth.

Sivara drew cold sweat as he asked, “...is there something you’re unhappy about?”

“Don’t worry, I have a policy of not letting my emotions affect my work. It just so happens that while I was busy handling the documents for those refugees, I overheard the soldiers making a fuss about some victory party. On top of that, one of the subordinate warriors I had my eyes on was taken away, and when I thought I would finally get the chance to duel someone, my partner was taken away. Not to mention, the florist, Ms. Chen whom I adored so much was speaking fondly of someone... But, don’t worry! Because I don’t mind any of these things one bit!” Jize said.

Sivara’s eyes started to water upon hearing of poor Jize’s misfortunes.

“Come, Lord Sivara,” Jize said as he pointed his sword at Sivara.

A great pressure emanated from his drawn blade.

Jize was a man in his middle 30s. He was full of vitality and – true to his name

– one of his eyes was covered by a patch with a skull for design.

He was not a veteran as old as Gowen, but he was a veteran nonetheless, and much of his achievements have left its mark on history.

That very man had a smile on his face as if nothing else could be better.

Jize was a user of the eastern curved sword arts and was taller by a head compared to other soldiers. The smile he wore on his face that gave him the image of a good uncle was put together solely by the efforts of his muscles.

The man he was smiling at was the only general of the south, Sivara. He was a young knight who would be reaching 29 this year. Though not comparable to Gene, he was also born in a small noble household and had joined the army to feed himself. He had a good face and blonde hair that was sure to catch attention.

His serene personality was a hit among the women, such that even in the capital, he would be fighting for first or second rank in terms of fame.

As a result, in the cities he had been initially appointed to, he has also come to be known as the archenemy of husbands with daughters, ‘Ripper Knight, the Marriage Destroyer.’

“I get it! I get it already! I’ll go work, so please put away that dangerous thing. Also, I haven’t laid my hand on Noa, so I’m innocent!”

“So you say, even though I’ve never called her by name!”

Raging flames could be seen from the depths of Jize’s eyes.

“Wa, wa!?” Sivara screamed as he dodged Jize’s thrusts.

“Nu... It seems my lack of sleep has dulled my movements,” Jize said.

“S-Seems so. You know what they say, lack of sleep is the archenemy of a sword master,” Sivara said.

Sivara, who had been sleeping snugly last night, shivered as Jize smiled at him.

“In that case, I shall be resting for the next three days. I take it, you will be able to accomplish your duty without fail, right, Lord Sivara?” Jize asked.

“Of course,” Sivara said.

“While I don’t think it possible, but in the one-in-a-million chance that upon waking up I find that you did not do your job, then...”

Before Sivara had noticed it, Jize’s curved sword was already sheathed. Jize slowly drew that blade from its sheath once more, causing the light of day to bounce off it and illuminate his face.

The resulting image was a smiling demon.

After Jize vanished from the room like a ghost, Sivara sighed.

“Good grief, that guy is too serious,” he complained.

That being said he needed to do something about the pile of documents in front of him.

“I’m really unlucky,” Sivara said with a languid expression.

He put away one document, and then another. When he reached the fifth document, Sivara’s countenance suddenly paled.

“A request for reinforcements... From Lord Gowen?”

As he read the contents, Sivara was shocked.

“What day is it!?”

Hitting the table, Sivara jumped up and called out across the hallway in a cool voice unlike his usual self.

“Wake Lord Jize up and quickly gather the platoon commanders! Have the non-patrolling soldiers prepare their clothes, and instruct them to wait at the barracks!”

Sivara clicked his tongue as he watched his subordinate run through the hallway, then he looked back at the desk.

“To go west from here... The path would be... We’ll have to send a notice. What about the defense?” Sivara muttered to himself.

“Lord Sivara...” Jize called out.

“Lord Jize, look at this!” Sivara said as he handed the letter.

Jize had the face of a demon from hell, but upon seeing Sivara’s panicked

face, even he could not help but reluctantly take the letter.

“A request for reinforcements from Lord Gowen... But this date...” Jize said.

“It probably got lost in the tumult of the enemy attacks,” Sivara said.

“What a disaster!” Jize cried.

All that sleepiness was blown away in one instant, and Sivara and Jize had to discuss how they would be moving.

Three days later, Sivara led 400 soldiers from the south to the west.

“Damn it all! Hurry, hurry!”

Within the Forest of Darkness was a horde of goblins desperately running.

“Pops, this pace is too fast!”

“Stupid! Stupid! I can’t believe I actually missed the king!”

The goblin at the lead swung his spear as he ran, pushing away the branches as he led his horde.

The goblin ran so fast that if the Paradua goblins could see him even they would be shocked.

The goblins running behind him could barely follow, and their weapons all showed signs of long use.

The goblin that called him ‘pops’, who was bigger than him by one size, used his axe to push away the thickets.

“Oi, you bastards! What do you think you’re doing running so slow!? Hurry up and follow pops!”

When that big goblin turned around, he rebuked the slower rare goblins and the even slower normal goblins.

In response, the goblins cried ‘Gya’ ‘Gya’ as they chased after their pops.

“Nu!?”

“Pops, there’s a beast up ahead! There’s three of ‘em!”

The goblin leading and the goblin behind him noticed it at almost the same time.

“Kill them while running! No mercy shall be shown to those who impede this Gi Zu Ruo’s path! After me, Ved!”

The four-armed monkeys approached them, but they did not slow down their pace in the slightest. With four arms to help them wreak destruction, the four-armed monkey barrel was a powerful group of beasts

Gi Zu ran without hesitation into the gaps between the four-armed monkeys, then as he brought back the spear he’d been using to brush away the

obstructing branches, he plunged into the barrel of monkeys.

Two of the four-armed monkeys jumped up the tree, while one stayed behind to receive Gi Zu's attack.

If Gi Zu were to try and attack the 2 monkeys at the trees, he wouldn't be able to dodge the attack of the monkey at the bottom, but if he were to ignore them and jump, they would attack him.

The monkeys at the top took out roughly shaved branches for weapons, while the monkey at the bottom started throwing rocks at Gi Zu.

Gi Zu only turned his neck to dodge those rocks as he made his way for that one monkey.

"GIGIyaaAAa!" The four-armed monkey cried out as it attacked Gi Zu with its arm.

A powerful wind erupted from that attack, causing the nearby branches to be blown away, but it could not even graze Gi Zu, for when Gi Zu saw the incoming attack, he immediately jumped onto the monkey, and using it as leverage, pushed himself even further.

When the monkeys at the top of the trees saw him jump, they jumped down with their weapons.

But Gi Zu was waiting for them.

"GURUUuOOAaAA!"

Gi Zu struck out with his iron spear, clashing with the monkey's shaved branch. The shaved branch was no match for Gi Zu's spear, and his spear easily penetrated the monkey's body.

Gi Zu did not stop there. With his spear still lodged into the monkey's body, he mustered his strength and threw the monkey into the other descending monkey.

"I don't have time to play with monkeys!"

Gi Zu retrieved his spear, and without even bothering to turn around, started running.

“Out of the way, monkeys!”

Right after Gi Zu, came Zu Ved.

The monkey that Gi Zu jumped on was still dazed, but unfortunately for it, it would have no opportunity to make heads or tails of what happened, for an axe very quickly descended on its skull followed by a sharp blow.

Like that Zu Ved followed after Gi Zu.

After Zu Ved came the rest of the horde, one after another, each one leaving another blow on the helpless monkeys.

By the time Gi Zu’s entire horde had passed, there was nothing left of the monkeys but a bunch of corpses that looked like old rags.



Yuan, who was tasked with the duty of protecting the colonial city, was worried over the goblins’ attack. Fortunately, the goblins couldn’t easily climb over the walls.

But then nightfall came.

To the humans who couldn’t see in the darkness, nighttime was a great disadvantage. After all, even their proud ballista would be useless if it couldn’t hit.

The goblins had tried to fill the moat behind the outer wall earlier, so Yuan had his men set up watch fires during the afternoon. That way they could light it up later in the night to let them see. He saw the goblins try to put them out, but they were prepared for them, so they had little success.

Other than sight, the howls of the beasts during the night were also a problem.

The howls of the beasts greatly unsettled the cattle, so much so that there were reports of them becoming highly strung.

The cattle were important to the colonial city. It would be horrible if they were to lose them.

By this time, Yuan had already been forced to reverse his sleeping schedule.

Because of that his eyes were bloodshot and there was a deep crease on his forehead.

“Commander! The oil is ready!” A soldier reported.

“Good. Let’s teach those goblins a lesson,” Yuan said.

Since they couldn’t see well in the dark, they would remove that darkness. No matter how deep the bosom of the night god was, the power of the god of fire was greater.

Yuan picked out a good time, then he had his men ready their bows. As his soldiers took position at the top of the castle walls, Yuan was able to faintly see the goblins despite them hiding under the wings of Werdna (Goddess of Darkness).

“Oil!” Yuan ordered.

Immediately, his men dipped their arrowheads into the oil. The arrowheads were attached to a piece of wood that was easily combustible.

“Flames!” Yuan ordered.

Immediately, a soldier carrying a watch fire ran in front of the archers, lighting up the arrowheads that were pointed toward the ground

“Take aim... Shoot!”

The arrows shot in the black of the night, drawing a curve in the air as they descended. When the arrows hit the ground, the wood attached to the arrowhead caught fire, allowing it to illuminate its surroundings.

Yuan had cleverly turned his arrows into torches. When he saw the goblins and the orcs illuminated, he laughed.

When his platoon of archers had confirmed that the fire arrows had landed, they switched to normal arrows and shot at the now visible enemy.

“Ready the ballistae!”

“Shoot!”

The bowstrings drawn to the limits, the ballistae let loose powerful arrows that penetrated the orcs’ shields.

Screams resounded throughout the battlefield as the goblins were forced back.

Yuan watched smugly with his arms folded.

“We can’t lose! We have to hold until Lord Gowen arrives!”

The soldiers cheered in response.

“Well done! This evening is our victory!”

The city was in high spirits.



Ra Gilmi Fishiga had his arms folded as he looked up at the twin moons veiled by the clouds. The plan they had been using until now had finally ended in defeat.

“They finally figured it out,” the orc king, Bui, said.

Gilmi nodded. “Humans truly are clever. I wonder if they have any limits at all.”

Watch fires illuminated the top of the castle walls. That small one over there was probably the enemy commander.

As Gilmi watched that figure, Bui spoke, “there’s still another card we can play.”

“The king wouldn’t want that, though. Our job is just to divert their attention,” Gilmi said.

“Right, but...” Bui said.

“Can’t stand losing and not getting even?” Gilmi asked.

When the goblin pointed out what he was feeling so bluntly, Bui couldn’t help but narrow his eyes.

“The moat should be mostly filled by now,” Gilmi said.

“Yes, but...” Bui said.

The moat nearest to the forest was already traversable since yesterday. The humans removed some of the fillings, but they were too scared of the goblins

attacking and couldn't remove much.

It wouldn't be a comfortable walk, but the moat was definitely traversable.

"Gather the chiefs," Gilmi said, then he looked at Bui.

"We'll destroy that outer wall first," Gilmi said.

Resolve burned in Gilmi's eyes as he hit Bui on the shoulder and vanished into the forest.

Chapter 160: The Battle of Piana Hill I

The western army Gowen led numbered approximately 1700 men strong.

It was on the beginning of the month of Toura that the goblins met them.

The touch of the wind was yet cold, the twin moons still had that poor countenance from the winter, and the wings of Werdna (Goddess of Darkness) veiled the squirming ones.

“Found them!” The leader of the wolf pack, Gi Gu Verbena, drew his long sword and axe as he ferociously laughed.

“Great brother!” Gu Big, Gu Long, and Gu Tough called out, then they sent the messengers to the king. “Let the king know, we’ve found the enemy.”

Reflected on the goblins’ eyes that could see even in the dark was a great number of humans they have never seen before.

To the goblins, the night was no different from afternoon. They could clearly see the human camp illuminated by watch fires.

“Nu...” Gi Gu groaned when he recalled that time they attacked the human camp. Back then the humans used wagons for fences, but this time around, the humans had a properly built fence and even a moat.

The defensive structures of the camp couldn’t be that sturdy as it had to accommodate an army encompassing 1700 soldiers, but when Gi Gu thought of how difficult the previous battle was, he couldn’t help but frown.

“Humans are truly meticulous.”

According to the king’s plan, they would be attacking the human reinforcements meant to save the colonial city.

Because of that Gi Gu was expecting the humans to be panicked. He did not expect them to actually take their time, even going as far as to make camp.

“If they hadn’t made camp, I was thinking of attacking, but...”

The southern goblins Gi Gu led numbered at most 500. If he were to follow the guerrilla tactics the king had taught him, it should be possible, but only if the enemy had an opening.

“Let’s try pry their guard open, shall we?”

Gi Gu learned from his battle with the killer ants that pushing on despite the odds could greatly tax the army. Gi Gu may have been given the duty of vanguard, but he had not lost sight of his main mission.

The night was the hour of monsters. Currently, the enemy seemed to be biding their time, so it didn’t seem wise to just show themselves nonchalantly before them.

“Send the beasts. If the enemy moves, attack!”

The southern beast tamers raised peculiar beasts. The beast tamers of the Gi Village preferred to raise double heads and triple boars, but the southern beast tamers raised southern beasts. Hence, they raised beasts such as the dino, elephants with giant tusks, or dinohius, boars with abnormally developed tusks.

On top of the warm climate of the south, the southern beasts were also bigger.

Because of that normal goblins couldn’t become beast tamers in the south. Rare was the lowest class that could start on the path of a beast tamer.

“But Great Brother... The king might catch up,” Gu Long said.

Gi Gu laughed. “Great! In that case, we’ll be able to show his majesty a bloodbath.”

“Great Brother is great!” Gu Long praised.

Gi Gu patted the three siblings, then he started giving instructions.



The night had only just begun, and the twin moons that shone dazzlingly in the night sky were crescent in shape.

As the yet cold evening winds blew, Gowen looked toward the darkness of Werdna’s wings.

The old wound in his shoulder ached as he muttered, “something doesn’t feel right.”

For someone like Gowen, who was an old veteran, he could sense the strange uneasiness in the air.

The scouts he’d sent said nothing was amiss, but he still felt something wasn’t right.

“We need to go help the colonial city as soon as possible, but... This pressure, this feeling... Could it be?”

The beacons of the colonial city showed that the city was holding just fine.

The clever goblins weren’t able to close in on Yuan.

The last battle with the goblins really helped Yuan grow, after all. He was no longer that same weak kid he was back then.

He was talented to begin with, so after a little polish, he’s finally become a decent commander.

—But the battlefield isn’t so simple.

Gowen was currently the western feudal lord, a holy knight, and a famed soldier renowned as the Iron-Armed Knight. But when he was just starting out, it wasn’t all smooth sailing.

He would lose one battle, only to lose the next, but it was by surviving those battles that Gowen gradually became stronger.

Grasping victory wasn’t an easy thing.

If they were only battling a normal horde of monsters, Gowen wouldn’t be so wary and would honestly be happy over his subordinate’s progress.

But the enemy this time were those goblins.

“Could it be... Could it be that the goblins planned this?”

Did they intentionally surround the colonial city to flush out the reinforcements and crush them?

The colonial city wouldn’t fall easily. It was made specifically to defend against the goblins, so it was only a given.

“So they spared themselves the trouble of throwing themselves against the wall and decided to attack the main force, huh?”

A siege battle did not suit the goblins.

Such a battle would usually be fought through siege weapons or through an endless wave of human resource.

The goblins couldn't possibly have any siege weapons, so that would leave them with no other choice but to overwhelm it to take it down.

The more Gowen thought about it, the more convinced he became. The goblins must've abandoned the colonial city and decided to attack the main force.

“I've been had,” Gowen grit his teeth as he came to that conclusion.

If the goblins doesn't come in the night, they might come when dawn breaks. No, they'll probably come right before the sun rises.

“But... This is a good opportunity.”

If the goblins were going to fight them on this plain, then nothing could be better. After all, the humans had the advantage on the plains. They couldn't possibly lose.

A faint smile appeared on Gowen's face as he thought of a plan to decimate the goblin horde with.

“Let's bring them to Piana's Hill.”

After thinking for awhile, Gowen went back to the tent, where his officers were gathered

He had much to do.

In the plains shrouded by morning fog was a small hill to the west and a small forest to the east that was not so easily discernible.

On the plains, Gowen gave out orders to his officers to prepare for departure.

They would be moving their forces out today as scheduled.

Preparations to deal with the goblins have already been made, so they could move at ease.

The soldiers folded their tents and disassembled the fences, then they packed them back into their carts and handed them over to the supply platoon.

The soldiers then took their breakfast in turns.

They had only been training for a year, but they moved like flowing water, as if they knew exactly what had to be done. This was the result of their daily training and Gowen's leadership.

"Commanders, we will be moving today as planned. Remember to keep calm at all times," Gowen said as he ate with the officers.

The officers did not eat differently from the regular soldiers. They ate the same hard bread and dried meat provided by the supply platoon.

After eating, the western army moved away from the forest, and up the small hill. Of course, they made sure to stay vigilant of the forest as they moved. When they reached the small hill, Gowen ordered the army to move further west, causing the army to move directly away from the forest.

"Hmm... They sure are biding their time," Gowen muttered to himself as he watched the forest from behind.

The western army moved with the cavalry at the front, followed by the chariots, then the supply platoon, the magic platoon, and lastly, the infantry under Gowen's direct command.

Gowen was trying to lure the goblins hiding in the forest.

—Look! My back is wide open!

Even when the slow-moving supply platoon and mage platoon changed course, there were no signs of attack coming from the forest. No, there were

signs, but they were being desperately kept in check.

The goblins were careful. Seeing that, Gowen couldn't help but grow tense.

Gowen had ordered the cavalry to go scout the path up ahead. They have already been briefed yesterday by Gowen on what to look out for, specifically ambushes or anything that might hinder the army, so they were able to masterfully carry out their orders.

"Reporting! No signs of enemy," the messenger reported.

Gowen nodded at the messenger's report, then he looked out over Piana Hill.

If one were to look at the hill from up the sky, he would quickly note that the terrain in Piana Hill was like that of a wave. Climb up one hill, and another would come. The hills were connected to each other, forming an image just like that of a wave. That wave-like terrain extended 7 kilometers east and west.

It was the kind of place that would lead one to think he's finally reached the bottom, only to realize that there was another hill waiting.

It was a place unsuitable for battle, but Gowen purposely picked it out.

The goblins wouldn't attack without an opening.

And the fact that they wouldn't do so without one – as proven last night – proved that there was someone clever among them.

Gowen wished to trap that clever goblin.

Right now, he was saying, 'Look! I'm open. Don't you want a piece of this?' But the moment that goblin takes that bait, Gowen would destroy him and his entire army.

It was because of that that Gowen had been showing his back to the forest.

When they had finally gotten down the hills for the second time, a report came.

"Enemy attack! Goblins are attacking from behind!" The messenger reported.

Gowen's lips curved into a smile as he looked behind.

At the top of the hill were beasts and goblins moving together.

“Cavalry, tell the chariots to move out! Execute the plan,” Gowen said.

“Yes, my lord!” The messenger said.

Gowen did not bother to turn back to the messenger as he gave out orders to the infantry. ”

“Length and Width Formation!”

At Gowen’s behest, the company commanders and platoon commanders moved their infantry. If one were to look at the formation from behind, one would see that the formation of the western army was shaped just like a rectangle.

“Maintain half a spear’s length between each other!”

Even as Gowen gave out orders, his gaze never left the goblin army that was making its way down the hill.

“Never seen those beasts before, but they’re probably variants of the shell elephants (derino). And those odd-looking boars are probably a relative to the triple boars.”

Gowen calmly analyzed the beasts as he continued giving orders.

“One row, move one step to the left!”

It was an odd order, but the soldiers followed nevertheless. Trust and reverence made Gowen’s orders absolute in their hearts.

The army of goblins and beasts descended from the hill with coordination none would expect from monsters. When they were only 200 meters away, Gowen shot his bow at the beasts.

“The targets are big! Keep calm and shoot!” The archer platoon commander said.

The archers smiled faintly at the ‘keep calm and shoot’ joke.

With their tension released, the archers were able to calmly shoot their bows.

Arrows rained down upon the goblin army, but though many of the beast tamers riding atop the beasts were shot down, the greater majority of them were fine.

Worse off were the beasts themselves. The beasts would never forget the pain of being covered in arrows.

The beasts turned a deaf ear toward their masters (beast tamers), and in their rage, charged toward the resentful humans.

But the humans were ready, their infantry wielded their spears as they waited for the beasts to reach them.

“Front row, one step to the left!”

The soldiers at the front row shifted to the left.

The beasts wanted to trample the humans, but all of the sudden, the humans before them vanished, and what greeted them was a path enclosed by human walls.

Dino-type and boar-type beasts were never skilled at changing direction. That was even truer for the southern beasts, whose bodies were bigger than their Gi Village counterpart, making it that much harder for them to change directions.

The beasts were left with no other choice but to run the path the humans had prepared for them.

“Throw your spears! Kill the beasts!”

Behind the infantry, atop the slightly elevated hill, was the supply platoon.

Just as Gowen had planned, the beasts coming down the hill was forced into Gowen’s human road, leading them up the hill, where the spear-armed supply platoon was waiting for them.

“Throw!”

At the behest of the supply platoon commander, countless spears came flying toward the beasts.

Bolstered by gravity, the spears drew a parabola in the air and penetrated them.

Their flesh skewered, their blood flowing, just like that the enraged beasts were forced to their knees.

The beasts didn’t notice because of their wrath, but they had incurred

countless wounds along the way. The resulting blood loss sapped away their strength, keeping them from moving any further.

When Gi Gu Verbena saw what happened to the beasts, heat dried up his brains and he yelled with mad fury. “Bastards! How dare you hurt my cute subordinates!”

Gi Gu drew his long sword and axe. “Slaughter them!”

“GURuoOOOAOO!” The goblins bellowed out in response.

The battle cries of the goblins overlapped each other as it resounded throughout the hills.

“Harpies, inform the king of this place!” Gi Gu said to the harpies flying beside him.

He didn’t bother waiting for a response.

“Onwards!” Gi Gu said as he led the 3 Gu Siblings and the rest of the southern horde into the human army.

When it came to a charge, the army with the greater momentum would obviously have the advantage. The greater the momentum, the easier it will be to tear the enemy apart. Following that logic, Gi Gu Verbena’s decision to attack when the human army was at the bottom was certainly not wrong.

Gi Gu Verbena’s skill was already shown by the fact that they patiently waited before attacking.

“Foolish goblins, let me teach you how to fight in the plains.”

Unfortunately, there was an enormous gap between the humans and the goblins when it came to battling on the plains. That difference came from the long history of bloodshed that resulted in the birth of tactics and army movement.

“Put your shields up and stop their charge! Closed Formation!”

As soon as Gowen saw the goblins charging, he immediately ordered his men to close the formation and clump up.

This was that same hedgehog-like formation that he’s played countless times

back during the battle in the forest.

The humans just clumped up, but with their numbers, they had more than enough to receive the goblins' attack. To begin with, they had the number advantage.

Despite the formation, Gi Gu and his goblins did not show any signs of stopping.

If they were humans, they would have surely slowed down, gently marched to Gowen's army, and then begin exchanging blows, but the goblins just kept on charging without a care for the world.

"That's not the goblin from before," Gowen said when he saw Gi Gu leading the horde.

This goblin was not the king class from before. This one was at least two sizes smaller than that goblin and the pressure he emanated was also different.

What exactly was this goblin horde?

Could the main force be sieging the colonial city? Could this merely be a plot to buy themselves more time?

No, that would only be possible if the goblins had siege weapons, but the beacon Yuan had lit showed that everything was going well.

That being the case, there might be another goblin horde.

"Regardless, we should cut down the enemy before us quickly. This is a good chance to crush them!"

By the time Gowen finished his short pondering, the goblin vanguards were just about to clash with the clumped up humans.

"GURUuooOOA!" Gi Gu bellowed out a howl as he sent a human's spear flying and crushed his shield with his axe.

When the humans cowered, the three Gu siblings charged in and bashed their axe into the humans.

Apparently, the charge of a duke class was too great for the closed formation to handle.

As soon as Gowen realized that, he gave out new orders. "I will deal with the big one. The middle line will move back, but the rest will move as we planned!"

"Yes, my lord!" The messenger said.

They humans maintained their closed formation despite the hole as they tried to gradually retreat, but Gi Gu's charge wouldn't let them.

The humans are retreating! After them!"

Gi Gu freely swung his axe and sword, mercilessly lopping off spears, shields, arms, legs, and necks.

Goblins swarmed in through the hole Gi Gu had punctured open. Gradually, that small hole grew bigger and bigger. It was only a matter of time before the middle line would collapse.

The goblins were able to push the humans back at the middle line, where Gi Gu fought, but the other parts of the battlefield were currently at a deadlock. That was because the other charges weren't as powerful as Gi Gu's. As a result, the humans' closed formation was able to stop them, and the goblins and humans ended up in a situation where they were pushing each other.

Looking at the whole picture, the goblins were clearly disadvantaged.

That was even truer considering how few this horde numbered.

It was a battle between 500 goblins and 1700 humans, after all.

No matter how much stamina the goblins had, they couldn't possibly win against an army that was over three times their size.

But that was precisely why Gi Gu decided to use the momentum from running down the hill. His plan was to confuse the enemy with the beast horde, then follow up with a charge of their own.

Unfortunately, Gowen's calm response and cleverness easily avoided that situation.

They were on the brink of collapse when the beast horde got covered in spears. The fact that Gi Gu was still able to force a deadlock with his next move was about the best he could ask for.

Gi Gu started thinking of a way to retreat while attacking.

As Gi Gu's long sword buried itself into a human's armor, he crushed the man's helmet with his axe, then he looked around him.

—But how?

If they climb back where they came from, the human archers will shoot them down.

A retreat after a charge wasn't easy.

Not to mention, they were currently in a place where the hills extended everywhere. Spears and arrows could come falling from atop the hills, and they wouldn't be able to block them.

It was here that Gi Gu finally realized that they were baited.

Gi Gu grit his molars as he grasped his weapons tight.

Their one saving grace was that they were able to push the middle line.

If they could just break that line, then they would be able to break the other lines too.

His mind made up, Gi Gu swung his weapons once more.

“Onwards!”

As Gi Gu's cry resounded, the goblins deepest in the middle line fought fiercer.

But Gi Gu's encouragement did not last long, for soon after, the sound of hooves reached their ears. It was the cavalry and the chariots that had gone ahead.

Just as Gowen had ordered them, they came from the flanks to surround the goblins.

“On this day, Lord Corseo shall be avenged! Spears!”

The cavalry wielded their spears and attacked the left flank of the goblins. Leading the cavalry was the young platoon leader that Corseo doted upon.

“Onwards!”

Eyes bloodshot, the platoon commander charged hatefully and unhesitatingly toward the goblins. His subordinates followed after him.

It was as if the late Corseo's tenacity had possessed the young platoon commander. That fierce charge was enough to collapse the goblins' attack.

The goblins that got hit by the charge flew into the air, trampled under the hooves of their horses.

"Die, monsters!"

After the cavalry collapsed the left flank, they ran around and attacked the left once more.

Seeing that, Gi Gu tried to stop them. "Those in the back, block that cavalry! Throw your spears!"

The tactics Gi Gu had ingrained into his horde was the king's three-man cell. One goblin to stop the enemy's attack, one goblin to collapse the enemy's stance, and one goblin to finish the enemy off.

They have been overwhelming their enemies up till now like that.

Because of that they had to stop the enemy. Unfortunately, the enemy wasn't so simple. The fact that they could send the goblins flying showed their strength wasn't normal.

Because of that Gi Gu had to give orders directly.

"Gu Long, Gu tough, Gu Big, I'm leaving this front to you! You must break through!"

"Yes, Great Brother!" The three goblins replied as they fought fiercely at the middle line.

Thinking he could leave that front to them, Gi Gu turned his back, only to hear Gu Tough's screams right after.

When he turned around again, the three goblins that have been fighting fiercely just a moment ago were all on the ground.

"So you're the commander," an old knight with gray hair said.

Gi Gu could tell from the knight's aura that he was no mere human, so he

quickly fixed his posture.

“Who are you!?”

“Gowen Ranid.”

“It’s you!”

Realizing that the commander was before him, Gi Gu bellowed out a howl and jumped at the holy knight.

Chapter 161: The Battle of Piana Hill II

Gi Gu's sword and axe came swinging for Gowen Ranid, but he easily parried the sword and dodged the axe.

Jumping lightly, Gowen Ranid took a step forward and thrust his sword.

Fortunately, Gi Gu somehow managed to dodge it, but unfortunately, he could only watch as the sword passed him and could not create an opening to counterattack. The most he could do was to back off.

"Nun!"

Refusing to be overwhelmed by fear, Gi Gu attacked once more, but Gowen just easily parried his attacks.

A fierce duel began to unfold in the middle line, where the goblins were pushing back the humans. No, that wasn't quite right. Actually, it was just Gi Gu who was fighting fiercely, Gowen didn't seem particularly affected by Gi Gu's attempts to kill him.

Gowen was just calmly dodging and parrying Gi Gu's attacks. He neither pushed himself nor tried to take risks, he was purely fighting defensively.

The reason Gowen was fighting like that was because of the circumstances at hand.

The way Gowen saw it, all they needed to win was to hold the middle line. The other lines may have been pushed by the goblins at the start, but right now, they were currently at a deadlock, and the supply platoon would soon be able to annihilate the beast horde. Moreover, the chariots and the cavalry were almost done surrounding the goblins.

The magic platoon and archers were also waiting in standby at the summit of the hill for the retreating goblins.

So long as Gowen was able to keep the goblin duke in check, the goblins would eventually exhaust themselves and die.

Which is also why Gi Gu was currently panicking.

The cavalry was repeatedly charging toward the goblins. Gi Gu wanted to do something about them, but the human knight before him wouldn't let him. He knew it the moment he'd turned his back and felt that terrifying pressure.

The goblins fighting at the center were starting to lose their momentum because of Gi Gu being pinned, so it was only natural that the other fronts would be doing even worse.

Gi Gu wanted to give out orders and break the deadlock of the other fronts, but this holy knight wouldn't even let him do that. Every time he tried to speak, his sword would come swigging, forcing him to swallow his words.

Gi Gu's patience was growing thin, but he endured nevertheless.

The only reason his horde hadn't fallen yet was because he was still fighting and because they knew the king was just behind them.

"The king's army will come soon! Don't let him see us fighting pathetically!" The platoon commanders of the goblins, the rare classes, encouraged the normal goblins.

At their words, the normal goblins mustered what was left of their strength and fought valiantly.

Gi Gu knew his men were almost at the last of their breath. Because of that he became even more panicked.

If he could just defeat the holy knight here, they would be able to turn things around.

Impatience filled Gi Gu as he clearly felt the weight of the responsibility he bore, but he did not let any of those feelings show on his face as he swung his sword again.



After the Goblin King interrogated the humans Gi Gu had caught, he immediately ordered his army to follow after Gi Gu's. The harpies were scouting ahead for them, so they could move at ease without worrying over ambushes. That being said the information they got was worrying.

The human army numbered 1700 men strong.

If that number was no exaggeration, Gi Gu would surely lose if he were to clash against them directly.

Even if he doesn't, it would only be a matter of time. The Goblin King did not want to lose him here.

"We must make it. We're moving at the speed of thunderclap! Those who can't keep up, just catch up later!"

That was the order to move at the fastest pace possible. At that, the Goblin King, the Riders of Paradua, the centaurs, and the fang tribe all ran at the lead.

"Gi Ga, watch the back!" The Goblin King said before running at full speed.

The red bear's mantle the goblin king wore fluttered in the wind, but he didn't have the time to care about it, for as soon as he noticed a harpy flying back, he ran even faster to reach her.

"Keep up with the king! March!" Gi Jii Yubu said, causing the spear-wielding goblins to move faster.

"We shall reclaim our plains!" Chief of the fangs, Mido, said.

As they ran toward the wave-like hills, they received information from harpy about the position of their enemies and allies.

"Paradua, centaurs, fangs! You are to rescue Gi Gu!"

As the horde under the Goblin King ran, he gave orders to drive away the enemy cavalry and charge into the enemy.

The Goblin King rendezvoused with Gi Jii and Gi Za after they'd caught up, then he took them and attacked the summit of a hill where the archers were.

"Onwards!" The Goblin King drew zweihander and commanded his army to move toward the hill.



"G-Goblins! A new horde is attacking from the west!" A messenger said.

Gowen listened to that report as he fought Gi Gu.

“We were almost done too,” Gowen clicked his tongue.

He had to give out new orders, so he parried the attacks of the goblin he was fighting.

He was planning to completely wipe out this goblin horde, so only the magic platoon and the archer platoon were positioned at the back.

Neither platoon could handle close-combat. If they were to fall, there was a chance of Gowen finding himself in the middle of a pincer attack. At which point, they would then be unable to keep their allies from collapsing in one fell swoop.

To avoid that, Gowen needed to have one platoon break off and focus on defense. If not that, then he would have to change the position of the platoons.

If he were to order one platoon to break off, he would end up spending more time on the enemy before him.

Gowen thought such a plan to be inane and decided against it. There was no choice. They would have to change course.

Gowen brought up the map of the surrounding area inside his head and searched for the best place to fight.

The east was being blocked by the duke-class goblin, while the new goblin horde was coming from the west. That being the case, he would have to make do with either the south or the north.

The north led to the snow god mountains and was abundant with forests. Such terrain did not suit big armies. To the south was the Piena Plains Road, which connected the south and the west.

“Should we move to the south then?” Gowen muttered to himself.

“Is planning something you do in the middle of a duel!?” Gi Gu yelled as he swung his long sword, but Gowen just flicked his attack away.

Gi Gu was shocked to see Gowen finally respond, but his puzzlement did not last long, for he stepped in further and swung his axe.

“Die!” Gi Gu said.

“Naive fool!” Gowen said back as he slipped past Gi Gu’s axe and aimed for Gi Gu’s feet.

Because Gowen was too close, Gi Gu could not run, and he could only watch as both of his legs were wounded. Gi Gu fell to his knees.

Gowen would have ended him there, but a howl from the west stopped the holy knight in his tracks.

“GURUuUuuOAAaAAa!”

It was an overwhelming howl that seemed to devour even the very heavens and earth themselves. Gowen’s face grimaced as he recognized that voice.

“It’s him!”

The image of a giant black goblin, a devil who could control the flames of hell, flashed through his mind.

Gowen no longer had the leisure to bother with the goblin before him.

If the Goblin King was the one chasing him from behind, he had to move now. Even a moment later would be too dangerous.

“Tell the cavalry and the chariots to stir up the goblins! As for the infantry, have them turn around in order!” Gowen turned his back on Gi Gu and gave orders to the messenger. “The archers are to suppress the enemy while the mages change course for the south.”

“You bastard!” Gi Gu yelled as he tried to force himself forward, but Gowen just kicked him with his iron shoes, then took his army and moved south.

Although the goblin forces were partially destroyed, it should still have been a difficult task to retreat, but Gowen was not an ordinary leader.

The suppressive fire of the archers destroyed whatever momentum Gi Gu’s forces had left, allowing Gowen to retreat his army from all fronts.

When the humans that have been defending all this time suddenly attacked, the goblins panicked. The humans used that opening to make a run for it.

The human army moved with the left wing first, then the right, and then the middle. The chariots and the cavalry were the last to go, but they made sure to

stir up the goblins before leaving.

The goblins wanted to pursue, but the cavalry and their spears kept them from doing so.

When the new goblin horde appeared, the magic platoon shot the magic they've been keeping all this time, then they quickly ran away with the supply platoon.

That splendid retreat left the Goblin King and Gi Jii with no room to pursue.

Most of Gowen's forces were able to retreat, but the human cavalry ended up fighting the Paradua riders a little.

"We can't just let them run! We have to at least avenge our fallen!"

The young chief of Paradua, Hal, led 100 iron legs and fought the cavalry.

"Think you filthy goblins could keep up with our western cavalry!?"

The young human platoon leader was full of vigor.

The goblins that have been scattered all this time found courage and started fighting back again.

"Give us glory, humans!"

"Crush them as you pass them!"

Hal and the human platoon commander clashed.

They sent a blow toward each other as they passed one another. Their subordinates followed their lead and did the same.

The two cavalry seemed to draw a circle as they moved around the battlefield and clashed once more.

"Tch, a tie!? Impossible!"

The human platoon commander grit his teeth, but Gowen's orders had already come. He had to go.

"You're running!? Bastards!" Hal yelled.

Before they could clash for the third time, the human cavalry turned tail and ran south.

"The human cavalry, huh. They're pretty good," Hal said before running to Gi Gu's platoon. There was no point in pursuing the humans any further.

With this the first battle between the humans and the goblins was concluded.

The goblin casualties numbered 100, while the humans' numbered 50.

It was amazing that the goblins were able to hurt the humans despite being surrounded, but the price for that 50 was grave. After all, Gi Gu incurred heavy wounds, and about a fifth of his forces were taken.

Merit-wise, this was the humans' victory.

Chapter 162: The Clash at Piena Plains I

After the battle the goblins rested and took care of the injured. Gi Ji Arsil and his subordinates, however, did not rest.

As scouts, their battle began with the end of each battle. The harpies could not see in the night, so they had to scout during the day, while the goblins scouted in the night.

The scouts followed after Gowen's army to the wide plains, then they checked the surroundings and observed the enemy.

Gowen's army showed no signs of exhaustion. They quietly made camp and passed the night without leaving any openings.

They cut down the tall grass, built fences and moats, and then took turns keeping watch as they rested.

Most of Gowen's army were fresh recruits, however, and they could not be satisfied unless they boasted of their achievements.

Because of that the camp was noisy at first, but when the wings of Werdna (Goddess of Darkness) came, even the fresh recruits couldn't help but go quiet.

Gi Gu thought the human camp troublesome. Gi Ji Arsil shared his sentiments. After all, the humans had cut down the surrounding tall grasses.

Gi Gu and his subordinates might be able to blend with the darkness, but the patrolling soldiers carried torches with them.

Without the tall grasses, there would be no way for them to hide themselves.

"Annoying..." Gi Ji muttered to himself.

He was about to order the scouts back when he noticed a shadow crawling from the corner of his eyes.

The shadow that passed him was too slender for a goblin.

Gi Ji watched that shadow, but it didn't seem to have noticed him, as it quickly stood up and headed for the hills.

“...”

Gi Ji quietly followed after the shadow. The black-clothed figure seemed to be a human.

Since the person-in-question was a human, there was no reason to hold back.

Gi Ji drew his dagger. To keep the light of the stars from reflecting off his blade, he kept it behind him as he quietly approached the human.

Then he lopped off the human's head.

“...Gu.”

In one fell swoop, the human's head was severed from his body. The black-clothed human could only utter a weak groan before falling to the ground.

When Gi Ji confirmed that the human was dead, he took off the man's outfit.

He compared the outfit with the human, but seeing nothing of interest, he decided to go back to the hills, where the king was.



The god of fire's hour gradually passed. Soon the hour of the night god would come, and darkness would once again cover the world.

Atop the walls, where the western sun's light fell, Yuan and his men stood vigil.

The howling beasts could be heard from the walls; they seemed to grow more numerous with each passing day. The beasts howling were not a mere 10 or 20, and the fact that they could hear them howling meant that they must be moving.

The western moat of the colonial city that faced the Forest of Darkness was already half-filled because of the goblins, but the other moats were still fine.

If the goblins were to attack, they would probably attack from the front (western wall). Of course, that didn't mean they couldn't attack elsewhere.

They have been attacking the same wall all this time, but the beasts seemed to be moving. What were the goblins scheming? Yuan grew anxious. It didn't help that he knew the goblins wouldn't attack carelessly.

Currently, the colonial city had 500 soldiers and 100 adventurers. In total, that was 600 soldiers. That was not actually sufficient to defend the entire colonial city.

Because of that they had no choice but to pick which ones to focus their forces on. Until now they've been defending the western wall, but...

"The beasts are moving to the south," Yuan muttered to himself. "It could be a diversion, but they could also be changing targets."

The western wall was closest to the forest, and only the east or west had a gate. The goblins would have to pick one of those if they were to attack.

At the very least, that's what humans would do, but... These weren't humans were they?

Just last night, they found out that the demihumans were fighting with the goblins. Those araneae demihumans easily climbed up the walls as if they were taking a stroll.

Fortunately, they were able to force them back with their bows, but with enemies like that, the south and north walls were no longer safe.

Still, only the western moat was filled. That was an important fact.

In any case, they had to endure until Gowen's reinforcements came.

"We'll focus on the western wall as we've done until now. As for the other walls, just keep doing your rounds!"

Soon... night came.

The hour of the monsters had come.

As Yuan rebuked himself for his cowardice, he called out to the guards. "We'll repel them tonight as well! Victory shall be ours!"

The soldiers cheered.

The colonial city was a long way away from falling.

The soldier Gowen sent to gather information was found dead nearby. There were no signs of fighting, so he was probably done in by the monsters.

“I didn’t expect them to catch him...”

That was a precious soldier Gowen had painfully raised, but this was no time to be crying.

“...Move the army. Send the cavalry to scout and watch the periphery,” Gowen said.

“My lord, would it not be wiser to return to the west for the time being?” A company commander asked.

Gowen shook his head. “No, we’re deciding this battle here.”

Gowen could not return back and reorganize his troops.

One reason was because of the lack of food.

The second reason was because the goblins unexpectedly ignored the fortress. Because of that Gowen ended up having to fight the goblins in the plains.

Originally, Gowen was hoping that the goblins would exhaust themselves trying to take down the fortress first, then he would come in and sweep them all away. Unfortunately, things did not go as he’d hoped, and the goblins split itself into two groups and attacked him.

At this rate, if Gowen does not quickly dispose the goblins, there’s a chance they might directly attack the west instead. There’s also the possibility that the other villages in the west would fall to the goblins.

If that were to happen most of the soldiers of Gowen’s army would surely lose morale, as most of them were the second or third son of a farming family.

Both as a feudal lord and as holy knight leading an army, Gowen’s choices in this battle have been limited due the movement of the goblin army.

“We’ll provoke the enemy depending on where they are. Hurry and get those chariots ready!” Gowen said to the company commanders and platoon commanders, then he took the infantry and assumed formation in the plains.

“This is where we’ll decide the battle! If we don’t defeat them here, the west will become their hunting grounds!”

The various commanders went back to their platoons, and Gowen waited for the scouts to return.

It wasn’t until an hour later that the scouts returned.

“The enemy has left the hills. They are marching toward us!” The scout said.

Gowen drew his sword and commanded his army. “All forces assume the deep battle formation and march!”



Morale in the Goblin King’s army was high as usual. It was almost as if that earlier defeat did not happen.

The goblin army began moving before the sun had even risen.

When Gi Gu and the others lead, the morale wasn’t low by any means, but the morale when the Goblin King was in charge was in a league of its own.

The goblin army including the elves and the demihumans numbered 1500 men strong.

It was on the hills that they passed the nights.

The goblin army’s numbers was by no means small, so there was not much room for them to spread their forces. Even if they tried, the terrain would get in the way, and it would not be easy to give out orders.

When Gi Ji came back during the night, the king decided to moved out before the sun rose.

Using the harpies, the Goblin King was able to precisely pinpoint the location of the western army. The Goblin King led his army straight toward them just like a predator that has set its eyes on a prey.

After leaving the hills, when the goblin army entered the plains, the king ordered the army to halt and take formation.

The human army was up ahead.

The king knew that, so he gathered the noble and duke goblins.

“Gi Jii will lead the middle guard, while the flanks will be taken by the Gaidga and by Gi Gu respectively. On the leftmost wing will be the centaur and the fangs, while the Paradua will be taking the rightmost wing,” the king explained as he drew a rough sketch of a map on the ground.

The king did not discriminate between races.

“The elves, Gi Za’s druids, Ga Ga’s platoon, and the platoon under my direct control will follow after Gi Jii, and then at the rearmost will be Gi Ji and the harpies.”

“So we are to clash against them head on, my liege?” Gi Jii Yubu confirmed.

“Yes. If we cannot win a straight-up fight here, then our world domination is hopeless!”

At those words, everyone, from the demihumans to the elves to the rest of those participating in this war, tensed up.

The power they had gained from walking the path of carnage... It would not lose! The king was claiming. And they were about to prove it here in the battlefield.

“If the king wills it, then we shall crush the enemy without fail,” Gi Ga said, representing the will of those gathered.

As the king rose, he pierced the map he’d drawn with zweihander. “Now, let us take the first step in our path to world domination!”

With a great howl, the platoons scattered, and everyone returned to their respective platoons.

2 hours later, the goblin army entered the plains in formation.



“I can see the goblins!” The soldiers said.

Gowen, on horseback, looked on across the plains.

The sight of the approaching cloud of dust accompanied by the sound of the trembling earth made even the very air seem hotter.

“So you’ve come, monsters! And with boldness too!”

The goblin army approached them in formation.

It was the same deep battle formation that Gowen was using.

“...So you’re saying you don’t need tricks, huh,” Gowen muttered.

The goblins believed in their power, but so did the humans. Their morale from yesterday’s battle was high, as they were able to exhibit the strength of the chariots and the cavalry in the plains.

They could use the terrain to their advantage to win, but...

“If that’s what you intend, then I shall crush that dream of yours, monsters!”

The goblins’ intentions were clear from their actions.

They wished to surpass humanity. Because of that Gowen decided to take them in a straight-up battle.

That was a decision resulting from his pride as a holy knight.

“There will be no tomorrow if we retreat here! Neither us nor our family! For the sake of tomorrow, for the sake of our families, let us fight these monsters to the bitter end!”

The soldiers cheered and morale reached a new level.

“Vanguards, advance!”

Gowen had split his infantry into two groups: the vanguard and the rear guard.

The row of soldiers would slam into the goblins forces. If there was one major difference between Gowen and the goblins, it was that Gowen’s soldiers were exactly like each other.

It was a stark contrast to the goblins that had various tribes and characteristics in each row.

At Gowen’s command 500 soldiers advanced, but the goblins did not falter.

“Show them our strength! Don’t put on an unsightly display before His Majesty!” Gi Jii said.

His platoon was currently at the center of the goblin army.

There were many rare class among Gi Jii's armored spearmen.

"Debts shall, be paid, in blood, humans!" The fierce arm, Gi Ba; the divine invader, Gi Ah; and the explorer, Gi Ii, were all a part of the battle demon, Gi Jii Yubu's, forces.

But the ones with the highest morale of them all was Gi Ba, who possessed the Man-Eating Snake skill, and Gi Bu, who was a 'wounded one', having only one arm.

If Gi Gu's generation were the first, then these goblins were of the third. They were the ones who were most affected by the human invasion, for it was they who were on the receiving end of the holy knights' and adventurers' attacks. They would never forget the fear and hate that was carved upon their souls that fateful day.

For them who has received Verid's divine protection, the hate they bore toward the humans was greater than their fear of death. It was such that even the king's orders, which were absolute among the goblins, would sometimes fail to reach their ears.

"They don't seem to be slowing down," Gowen muttered as he watched the armies approach each other.

In a fight between humans, normally the armies would slow down and catch their breath before clashing.

"Hmm... Are they hurrying? Or are their brakes broken?"

Gowen decided there was probably an unidentified weakness in the goblins' high morale.

He gave another order. "Vanguards, halt! Assume defensive formation! Rear guards, spears at the ready! Advance!"

There was still a kilometer's distance between the goblins and the vanguards. It was too far for archers and mages, so Gowen decided to have the infantry assume a defensive formation.

If the enemy was being reckless, it would be foolish to just receive that mad charge straight-up; therefore, Gowen decided to go on the defensive.

The goblins did not show any signs of stopping. In fact, they started to move even faster.

Every howl that bellowed seemed to excite the goblin army further.

“Brace yourselves for impact! If you can endure this first attack, victory will be ours!” Gowen said as he watched the goblins disconnected charge close in.

“Archers, mages, fire!”

To weaken the goblin army’s charge even a little, Gowen had his range combatants fire at them. At that, arrows flew, and water and fire spells were cast.

“What!?”

But the one to cry out in surprise was not the goblins nor its king, but Gowen, the man who’d attacked himself.

Wind

Shield

Wind of Heaven’s Blessing

For a sylph’s chant resounded, and a spell was invoked, protecting the goblin army from the rain of arrows.

“You’re telling me there were elves behind the goblins!?”

Gowen had miscalculated. He did not know nor expect the goblin army to have elves among their ranks.

The fact that there were enemies other than the goblins caused a slight tremor to rise in Gowen’s command.

What was worse was that the foreign element was elves.

The fangs and the centaurs that he saw raising up those clouds of dust, he could still somewhat understand. After all, they were driven away from the human world. They probably formed an alliance out of their common hate for humanity.

But the elves were different.

Though they did not stand as humanity’s equals, their long life and talent in magic has allowed them to integrate into human society. They were a race already accepted in the human world, the elven adventurers were proof of that.

Yet that very race had colluded with the goblins and was now baring its fangs.

“Damn you!” Gowen spat as his eyes fell on his soldiers.

Before the goblin army’s overwhelming pressure, Gowen’s army was delayed a little in fixing their formation, but they still made it in time.

“If you’re coming, then come! I’ll show you how to fight on the plains!”

Gowen’s soldiers assumed the closed formation. Right now, they looked just like a clump of hedgehogs.

“Cavalry, advance! Trample the enemy cavalry, and then form a concave around them! Half a full surround will do!” Gowen said.

The cavalry waiting at the back moved out.

“It’s finally our turn! We’ll dye this land in their blood!” The human platoon commander said.

The human cavalry rode onwards, their aim was none other than Paradua’s riders.

“I’m going to order everyone to charge,” the Goblin King said as he wielded zweihander on his shoulders.

“But our lines are a mess,” Gi Za said.

“It’s fine. We’ll show the humans the difference in our strength.”

“Good then,” Gi Za said with a smile before turning to Gi Do, “Gi Do! Have the druids prepare! We’ll shoot the moment the main force charges!”

The Goblin King breathed deeply.

He looked up ahead as his chest burned within.

“All soldiers, charge!!”

At the Goblin King’s bellowing howl, the entire goblin army bellowed back, frenzied.

Chapter 163: The Clash at Piena Plains II

GURUuuuOOOOAOOAOAAaa!!

When the goblin army howled as one, most of the new recruits in the human army faltered.

The earth trembled as that grotesque horde of monsters approached.

Though their shields obstructed their sight and though their hands held firmly to their spears, they could not shake off the fear they felt from the trembling earth. That fear grasped their heart, and they found themselves unable to move.

“Persevere! The holy knight, Gowen Ranid, is with you! So claim the glory of victory with your spears!” Gowen said to encourage the soldiers.

Thanks to Gowen’s encouragement, the human army was somehow able to endure the pressure of the goblin army, and their formation did not break.

But while the humans could be pacified with a few words, the animals were different.

The cavalry was fine as they’ve already left, but the horses of the chariot platoon that was currently on standby were greatly affected by that earlier howl, causing them to fall into panic before they could even clash with the enemy.

“Calm those horses down!”

The coachmen eventually managed to calm the horses down, but by that time, the demihumans had already reached them.

“Stand down!” The leader of the fang tribe, Mido the Tyrant, yelled as he attacked the chariots. Behind him were the rest of the fang tribe and the centaurs.

“Don’t fall behind the fangs! This day we shall redeem ourselves!” The current leader of the centaurs and successor to Daizos, Tianos, raised his spear and attacked the chariots.

“The chariots were attacked before they could move... Magic platoon! Prioritize supporting the chariots!” Gowen said.

The greater physical abilities of the werewolves allowed them to send the horses flying and drag the coachmen to the ground. While the fangs fought, Cynthia led the gray wolves and spread chaos in the battlefield.

“Enemy approaching!”

When Gowen received that report, he looked up ahead.

“Archers, provide cover. Your target will be the enemy in front!”

Gowen figured that the sylph magic protecting the goblins would eventually stop, so he ordered the archers to keep on shooting.

“Remember yesterday! These monsters can never hope to go past our shields!” An infantry platoon commander said.

If they could endure the charge of the goblins back at the cliffs, then they should be able to endure their charge here on the plains.

As the soldiers calmed down, they fixed their grip on their spears.

But what the humans misunderstood was that the forces they fought that day were by no means the strongest of the goblins. Today, however, they would be facing the greatest of the goblins’ warriors.

“Ra Gilion!” One of the strongest goblins, Rashka the Chief of the Gaidga, invoked his ability, causing a black light to slam into the line of human soldiers.

“Warriors of Gaidga! Stomp the humans dead!” Rashka swung his club and crushed the iron helmet of a soldier.

“Die, hUmAn fiLThsSs!! Gi Ba howled and tore through the human ranks as he lost himself in the Man-Eater Skill.

“Now, fire!”

Until now Gi Za and the rest of the druids have been leaving the defense to the elves, but the moment Gi Za said that, the druids simultaneously cast their spells.

“...We’re being pushed back,” Gowen muttered.

As he watched the battlefield, he calculated in his mind when to give the next order.

From the humans' perspective, they were currently being pushed at the center and right wing.

From the goblins' perspective, Gi Jii, who fought at the center, and the demihumans, who fought at the leftmost wing[1], were currently in the best position.

"The cavalry aren't doing too bad, though."

From the humans' perspective, their cavalry direct clashed with the goblin cavalry. The battle between the two cavalry was leaning toward the humans thanks to their greater numbers.

"Rear guard, provide cover for the 3rd chariot platoon!"

When Gowen took a closer look at the battlefield, he noted that the goblins fighting around the left wing and the center were no different from the goblins they defeated yesterday; they could still tolerate their attacks to some extent. Because of that he decided to have the rear guard support the chariots first, as they still haven't gotten back up on their feet.

On the other side, the Goblin King watched as the Paradua fought a hard battle against the human cavalry.

"Your Majesty, if the need arises, we can go anytime to help the Paradua," Gi Ji Arsil said.

His platoon of assassins did not even number a hundred, but Gi Ji offered to help nevertheless. He seemed impatient.

"A needless worry, Gi Ji. The man leading the Paradua is none other than their chief, Hal. He is a proud man," the Goblin King said.

"If that is your will," Gi Ji said as he bowed his head.

The king turned his eyes away from Gi Ji and quietly oversaw the battlefield.

"Onwards! Let the humans know the proud name of Paradua's riders!" Hal said.

He spun his spear over his head once, and as he let go of the reins, he wielded his spear with both hands.

As the beast cavalry of Paradia clashed with the human cavalry, Hal urged his black tiger onwards in an attempt to settle yesterday's duel.

The formation of the Paradia cavalry gradually formed a wedge-shape with Hal at the center, the human cavalry formed a similar shape.

"GURUuuOOAA!"

"DliEEeeE!! Goblin!"

As Hal passed the commander of the human cavalry, sparks erupted between their spears.

"It didn't work!?"

"Damn it!"

One was a monster, one was a human, but both clicked their tongues in the same way as they swept away the next enemy before them.

The downside to the cavalry was that the moment they stopped, they would have to ride some distance again to rebuild their momentum. Unfortunately, no matter how much they hated it, the unending wave of enemies caused their speed to dwindle, and the battle gradually became chaotic.

After the short exchange when they briefly stopped moving, the two cavalry commanders began to ponder how to fight without stopping.

If they were to show their back by mistake, they would be giving their enemy a big opening. That earlier clash was indeed a mistake on both sides.



One hour later, the two armies were in a deadlock. Even if one side managed to take a step forward, they would only end up being pushed back, leaving the situation the same as it was at the start.

The once chaotic chariots have already recovered thanks to the influx of infantry and mages.

On the goblin side, they were finally starting to encroach the center with the

Gaidga tribe and Gi Ji's army as the leading players.

"Spears are useless against the demihumans! Use your swords!"

As the battle grew violent, the various commanders found themselves too busy to ask Gowen for instructions. They had to fight while relying only on their own judgment.

The infantry supporting the chariots switched their weapons for long swords as they stood against the agile werewolves.

"Chariots, attack! Go for the back!"

After the chariots had stabilized, Gowen ordered them to attack the enemies' back. He was hoping to plant the threat of being surrounded into the goblins' heads to slow down their push on the center.

"Dispatch the chariots! Trample those goblins underfoot!" A company commander said.

The chariots have been pushed back by the goblins until now, but their morale was high. They were neither scared nor hesitant, if anything, they were glad that they could finally vent out the anger they've been keeping all this time.

"Don't let them do as they please! Lord Mido, I'll leave this here to you!" Chief of the centaurs, Tianos, said.

At that, he took approximately 100 centaurs and galloped toward the chariots.

"Suppress them! We'll attack as we pass them!"

The centaurs were planning to strike the chariots with their spears, but the humans did something unexpected.

"Throw the spears!"

The chariots were less mobile compared to the cavalry, but in exchange, they had a mountain of weapons at their disposal.

The centaurs that tried to approach them were met with flying spears.

"At this rate..."

Tianos led his centaurs away from the chariots, and as a result, the chariots rode faster for the back of the army.

“What’s the matter, Tianos!? At that rate, the proud name of the centaurs will be ran through the mud!”

Mido’s whole body was covered in blood, his eyes were bloodshot, and he wore a fierce smile on his face.

He teased Tianos as he rendezvoused with him.

“The battle’s just starting!” Tianos retorted.

Mido bellowed out a battle cry, then as he calculated the gap between each throw, he led the fang tribe toward the chariots.

“Ku... The human infantry... Wait, this isn’t the time for this! Don’t let the fangs get a lead over us!” Tianos said.

“UuoOOON!” Cynthia howled as she led the gray wolves, then she brought her pack before the fang tribe. Short red wolves and brown wolves ran by the legs of the giant gray wolves.

“Wolves!? Bows!”

After the spears the chariots brought out bows next. They were originally specialized in spears, but a few months ago, they also started training in bows. Their experience in archery was by no means deep, but it was much easier to shoot arrows from a chariot than on horseback.

Arrows were pulled to the bowstring’s limit as the fangs and the gray wolves approached them, then they released them.

Most of the arrows headed for the giant gray wolves, so the smaller wolves were able to slip in and attack the humans riding the chariots.

“Oh shit! Gya!”

The soldiers cried out as the wolves tore apart their throats. As soldiers fell off the chariots and as the gray wolves passed by them, Cynthia howled once more.

As the gray wolves leaped at the chariots, the fangs passed them by.

“Thank you, young lady! Let’s go!” Mido said as he led the fangs to attack

another chariot.

“Show them the spirit of the centaurs! Trample them!”

“Shoot your bows and run away from them!”

The coachmen whipped the horses as archers shot volleys of arrows toward their approaching enemies. They ended up losing half their numbers, but in the end, they managed to shake off the centaurs and fangs and make their way to the back.

Clouds of dust rose as the chariots and the demihumans ran through the battlefield.

The Goblin King, who had been watching their battle, turned his gaze to another part of the battlefield.

“Show them Gaidga’s valor!”

Rashka’s fierce attacks tore through the enemy ranks easily. The humans had no answer to his brutish strength.

The Gaidga tribe gathered around Rashka as they forced themselves into the human lines. By this time, they were already half way in.

Unfortunately, the Man-Eating Snake, Gi Ba, could not attack as fiercely as the Gaidga. Try as he might to push on, a rare class could not compare to a duke class.

“Grr, damn you, damn you!” Gi Ba tried to move further, but Gi Jii Yubu stopped him.

“Gi Ba, return to your line and take command! Front row, advance! Ready your spears!”

Gi Jii Yubu moved his army up to where Gi Ba was, then they clashed with the humans.

Gi Ba took ragged breaths as he went back to his line.

Gritting his teeth, Gi Ba yelled at the normal goblins. “Kill them! Kill them all!”

The normal goblins fought fiercely at Gi Ba’s appeal.

Gi Jii advanced his forces to line up with the Gaidga. By doing so, he managed

to push the enemy back a line.

As the infantry were pushed back by the Gaidga, their lines eventually collapsed.

“Just one more push,” the Goblin King muttered as he held his great sword tight.

Gaidga and Gi Jii were the leading players pushing the humans back, but everyone else was an even match.

To whom victory would fall was yet up in the air, so the Goblin King had Gi Ga Rax move the imperial guards.

“Your Majesty, the enemies are coming from behind!” Gi Ji yelled.

The Goblin King clicked his tongue as he turned around.

“Chariots!”

The Goblin King could not just leave them be, so he ordered Gi Ji to intercept them.

Gi Ji faced the chariots with high spirits, but the chariots seemed only to mock Gi Ji, as they ignored him and took a large detour, then they approached the back of the various platoons.

The Goblin King wanted to attack more, but the annoying chariots kept buzzing behind them like an annoying fly, keeping them from committing to a big attack.

The possibility of being attacked by chariots from behind was too great a threat.

“Have the fangs and the centaurs crush those things!”

Gi Ji’s platoon could not catch up to the chariots. Perhaps he might be able to suppress them from behind, but he wouldn’t be able to wipe them out.

[1] From the perspective of the goblins, the right wing of the humans is left.

“Have the chariots come back! Tell the center to pull back too!”

Gowen narrowed his eyes as he watched the goblins push them back and as he tried to restore the disordered formation.

The right wing had managed to drive away the demihumans. They had to sacrifice half of the chariots to achieve it, but with it, they were able to buy some much needed time.

The human cavalry was currently fighting the goblin cavalry in the left wing.

“3rd platoon support the right wing!”

Since the cavalry was already in a melee, Gowen decided to send the third platoon.

“Yes, my lord!” The platoon commander said.

After driving away the demihumans from the right wing, the battle moved to surround the Gaidga tribe.

Gowen moved the soldiers from the lines they had an advantage in to support the flanks. The right wing no longer had the demihumans and the left wing had Gi Gu’s goblins, which were still weak from yesterday’s battle.

With the center being pushed back and the flanks being pushed forward, the battle naturally progressed to surround the center.

When the chariots came back, Gowen had the mages ride with them. The mages numbered 200 all in all, so it was not possible to have the remaining 50 chariots accommodate them all.

Gowen picked out 50 mages to ride the chariots, then he ordered the rest to provide cover from the back.

“Archers, don’t let the enemy mages approach! Keep shooting at them!”

The archers formed rows as they retreated while shooting at the enemy.

The supply platoon at the back coordinated with them and supplied them with more quivers every time they ran out of arrows.

The orchestra-like coordination that allowed the archers to shoot volley after volley of arrows was a testament to Gowen’s abilities.

Gowen had his soldiers retreat while they surrounded the enemy.

“Chief! There are enemies behind us!” Dashka of Gaidga said.

When Rashka heard that he hesitated. If it was before he might have continued attacking with no hesitation, but Rashka has already learned his lesson from the elven war. Unfortunately, Gowen did not miss that slight hesitation.

“Magic platoon, focus fire on the center!”

The mages at the back simultaneously casted their magic. Fire and water bullets rained from above, dulling the Gaidga’s movements.

Afterwards, Gowen ordered the magic platoon to attack Gi Jii next.

“...Stubborn,” Gowen muttered to himself as he looked up at the body of the fire god shining brilliantly up in the sky.

The battle that began early this morning has been raging on for several hours already.

If this were a battle between humans, the enemy would be running out of steam soon.

Unfortunately, Gowen failed to take into account the stamina of the goblins.

Gowen has never really fought the goblins in a proper war. After all, monsters lining up in formation to wage war on humans was a strange sight never before seen.

Gowen hoped to exhaust the goblins and then attack, but at the rate they were going, their formations would collapse first before he could ever hope to.

The humans were bound to run out of steam before the goblins. They could no longer rely on the potions either, for most of it has already been distributed by the supply platoon.

The rest of their supplies were also running thin.

Gowen looked over the battlefield once more, searching for the enemy’s weak point. The enemy must have a weak point somewhere.

“We’ve gotten this far, we can’t retreat.”

Gowen had sent the chariots with the mages to the left wing in hopes of expelling the enemy cavalry while recovering their own.

“Order the cavalry to retreat!”

“Damn it! We’re retreating!”

At the cavalry commander’s behest, the cavalry began to break away. When Hal saw that, he spun his blood-stained spear and yelled, “After them! Don’t let them run!”

But the chariots Gowen had sent kept them from pursuing the human cavalry.

The chariots’ long range attacks left the goblin cavalry with no choice but to retreat.

“Curse them! Retreat!”

After crushing the two wings, Gowen’s army finally managed to begin surrounding the goblin army. It was a thin surround, however. Regardless, it was here that Gowen decided to gamble.

“Now, attack! Infantry, endure it!”

At Gowen’s behest, the commanders of the infantry platoons yelled, “Spears out! Attack!”

The human soldiers mustered every bit of courage they had as they thrust out their spear toward the goblins’ own. Many goblins and humans fell as they struck each other dead.

Meanwhile, the chariots and the cavalry came back to attack the goblins from the flanks.

“Great Brother! They’re attacking from the right and from the back!”

Gi Gu, who was still wounded from yesterday’s battle, ordered his reserves to expand to the back.

“Do as Gi Jii does! Just stop the enemy’s attack!”

The goblin’s right wing has taken to defense, but Gaidga, who was fighting at the left wing, yelled with fury, “Push them back!”

Instead of defending, Gaidga pushed back even harder, causing the humans

that were spread thin to falter.

“Teach those goblins their place!”

The human cavalry tried to attack from the left wing, but this time, their allies were trampled over by the giant goblins right in front of them. Immediately, they decided to charge toward the goblins.

At that, even the Gaidga found it difficult to maintain their lines.

Unable to stop the fierce attack of the human cavalry, the Gaidga, who continued to push onwards, was cut off from the back.

When the Goblin King saw that the enemy forces' momentum had reached peak levels, he raised his voice, “Gi Za, support the Gaidga! Gi Ga, take the reserves and move out! After me!”

Deciding that this would be the end, the Goblin King led the reserves and moved out.

“Order Rashka to withdraw!”

“Unu!?”

Though unwilling, Rashka ordered the Gaidga to withdraw. Even a battle junkie like him could see that they were suffering too many casualties.

“We’re retreating anyway, so we might as well get a piece of those human cavalry along the way!”

Rashka was fuming as he ordered his men to retreat. He frowned in regret as he defended the back of his horde from the attack of the infantry.

As the Gaidga retreated, they focused their attacks on the human cavalry that had forced its way in.

“Retreat! Retreat!”

As Rashka yelled retreat with much frustration and deflected spear after spear, he withdrew with the Gaidga while sending humans flying.

The human cavalry that had forced themselves in from the back ended up clashing with Dashka. Dashka stopped the horse with his own body.

“Fire! Send the humans off with the winds of the forest!” Gi Za yelled.

At those words, the cavalry that had attacked the Gaidga stopped.

The Gaidga used that opening to withdraw altogether.

“Attack! This is our chance to surround them!”

When Gowen saw the Gaidga withdraw, he ordered his men to attack. At that, the infantry Rashka had been keeping in check came gushing forth.

No matter how powerful Rashka might have been among the goblins, even he would get weaker after fighting for so long.

All the more so when the human spearmen were relying on their numbers.

“Annoying!” Rashka spat as he swung his club from the back of the Gaidga Horde, but exhausted, Rashka slipped on the blood stained ground.

“Nu!?” Rashka cried out.

Seeing that, the soldiers immediately thrust out their spears.

So this is where the one-eyed demon dies. For a moment, Rashka closed his eyes.

Enchant

“Turn me into a blade!

As the king’s voice echoed, the soldiers that sought to kill Rashka were all cleaved in half. They quietly sank into the pool of blood beneath them.

Chapter 164: The Clash at Piena Plains III

It doesn't matter how skillful or valiant a general is, it is only when the Goblin King is leading that the goblins will be able to show their true power.

As if to prove that, the moment the Goblin King appeared, the gaze of the goblins changed across all classes.

"What's the matter, Rashka? Had enough?" The Goblin King laughed fearlessly.

Rashka snorted as he picked himself up.

"Hah! The likes of these ain't enough to make a fitting grave for the great Rashka!"

Rashka shook off the blood from his body and howled.

"Just watch! We'll fix our formations quickly and catch up to you!" Rashka said.

"I'll be waiting then!" The Goblin King replied.

As black flames covered Zweihander, the Goblin King commanded.

"Teach these humans the might of the goblins!"

Gi Jii, who was adjacent to the king, nodded.

"Fix the formation and match the king's attack! Gi Ba, Gi Ah, Gi Ii! Don't get left behind!"

The voice of the wounded Gi Gu, who was fighting nearby, also reached the king.

"The king has entered the fray..."

Gi Gu hit his wounded legs and forced his hazy consciousness sober.

"Think pain can stop me!? Think again! Go attack, you bastards! If we fall behind the king, we'll be putting the position vanguard to shame!"

Gi Gu rebuked his subordinates as he moved toward the frontlines.

A human thrust out his spear toward Gi Gu, but Gi Gu cut it down and lopped off the human's head with his long sword.

"We'll redeem ourselves from yesterday's defeat! Let these whoresons know the bitter taste of defeat!"

As Gi Gu drowned out the pain with his rage, he began attacking the enemy.

"Those who can't move, stay at the back and wait for orders. Those who can shall ride with me to attack those chariots!"

The Paradua goblins had to retreat momentarily because of the mage-loaded chariots. In fact, the fangs and the centaurs also had to retreat. After the Paradua were able to fix their formation, they reentered the battlefield.

"We'll cut open a path for the king! Don't let the enemies near him!"

Gi Go Rax led the 'wounded ones' from black-tiger-back. He breathed in sync with his black tiger as he used his long arm to easily skewer the iron-armored humans.

"If you call yourselves the king's imperial guards, then kill the human bastards even if you have to die with them!"

These goblins were all missing a limb or two. Normally, they would have been abandoned somewhere, but the king allowed them to continue fighting. Because of that these goblins felt much gratitude toward the king. With that gratitude and Gi Go's command, they fearlessly threw their bodies into the fires of war.

They fought with such ferocity that it was almost comparable to the Gaidga.

"Open a path for the king! Expel the interlopers!"

Gi Za Zakuend and his platoon of druids shot water and wind bullets at the enemy.

Like that the goblins that were on the edge of death suddenly came back to life.

A cold sweat slid down Gowen's back. "Impossible..."

The goblins that should have already reached their limits fought back with

even greater strength.

This wasn't the time to be crying foul; however, so Gowen grit his teeth and forced himself to accept reality.

After the goblins took back the initiative, the human formations began to collapse. That earlier decision to have the infantry advance has now become their worst enemy.

"I'm moving out! Just keep fighting like this!"

Gowen no longer had any tricks under his sleeves.

He had already played all of his cards, and none of the platoons had any strength left to spare.

That being the case, the only thing Gowen could do now was to send himself out.

The Goblin King was the one who revived the goblin army. If he could stop him, they might still be able to win this battle.

Having decided that, Gowen moved out.

"It's not my field of expertise, but..."

Gowen drew his bow as he rode. His aim was the Goblin King at the head of the army.

"Die!"

Gowen released the bow, but the arrow was struck down by Gi Ga Rax.

"Think I'll let you reach the king!?"

The knight class, Gi Ga Rax, blocked Gowen's path.

Gowen clicked his tongue.

"Move!"

Gowen swung his spear from atop his horse, but it was blocked by Gi Ga, who was breathing as one with his black tiger.

The two warriors thrust their spear, twisted it, swept it. They drew out every bit of skill they had as they fought each other.

After clashing 30 times, their battle started affecting their surroundings.

The one panicking was Gowen.

He wanted to remove this goblin before him quickly, so he could quickly defeat that Goblin King. If not, there would be no hope for victory.

The more time he wasted with this goblin, the closer defeat inched in.

Gowen and Gi Gu were mostly equal skill-wise, though Gowen was a little better.

Unfortunately, Gi Ga Rax, who has gone back from hell, was extremely tenacious, causing Gowen to panic even more.

“Damn you! Nu!?”

“The enemy commander!? In that case, fall prey to my winds!”

In his one moment of panic, Gi Za invoked his wind spell and shot him.

Gowen managed to repel it with a swing of his spear, but Gi Ga Rax managed to take advantage of that to graze his shoulder.

“Ku!?”

It was only a graze, but that was still an attack from a knight-class goblin. The strength behind that simple graze was enough to dismount Gowen.

Gi Ji Arsil, the assassin, slithered in from the shadows to take Gowen from behind.

“...!”

Gi Ji’s dagger struck out from the shadows toward Gowen’s neck.

“That sort of trick won’t fly, monster!”

In response, Gowen immediately drew his long sword and repelled Gi Ji.

Gi Ji clicked his tongue as he quietly vanished into the shadows.

Gowen, now dismounted with a long sword in hand, stared wordlessly at Gi Ga, who was still mounted on his black tiger. They quietly searched each other for an opening.

The first one to move was Gowen.

He ran up to Gi Ga with his long sword in one hand. He moved so fast it was almost as if he were leaping.

In response, Gi Ga reflexively struck out his spear.

“What!?” Gi Ga cried out in surprise.

Gowen deflected Gi Ga’s spear and landed a blow on Gi Ga’s black tiger, then he left Gi Ga in the dust and ran toward the king.

“...!”

When Gi Ji Arsil saw Gowen running for the king, he tried to attack him from behind, but Gowen swung his sword at him without even looking.

Gi Ji somehow managed to block with his dagger, but half of it was broken from that one attack, leaving it unusable.

“Shit!” Gi Ji spat.

It was rare for the goblin to cuss, but with that, he had no choice but to withdraw and look for a different prey.

He was still somewhat calm as he withdrew for he did not really believe that the king was in any danger. The king couldn’t possibly lose, after all.

Gowen ran madly for the Goblin King. He did not stop even as he cut down the goblins that blocked his way.

“...I’ve found you! Goblin King!”

Gowen was already covered in wounds by the time he reached the Goblin King, yet his spirits remained high. Like a lion he vigorously leaped for the Goblin King and stood between him and the human soldiers.

“You won’t be doing as you please anymore!”

Blood dripped from Gowen’s long sword as he challenged the Goblin King.

“Leave this one to me! The rest of you kill everyone else!” The Goblin King gave orders as he stared at the figure blocking his path and wielded Flamberge.

The two leaders were about to fight in a duel, but even then the war around them did not cease.

In one sense, the order the king just handed out was exactly what Gowen feared the most.

Black flames burned on the Goblin King's great sword.

“I won’t let you!”

Even in this situation Gowen believed that they could win as long as he could subjugate the Goblin King.

Also, while the king may have ordered the goblins not to touch him, that order probably wouldn’t hold in the case he could actually defeat him.

Gowen needed to end this battle quickly, or else he would only find himself in the worst possible situation: him alone in the middle of enemy forces.

If a quick victory wasn’t possible, then it would be best for him to just retreat with the army. Dying here now would only disadvantage humanity.

Gowen ran as he brandished his sword.

In response, the Goblin King swung his great sword. His sword was long enough to be a spear as far as humans were concerned, but he was able to easily swing it with one hand.

The Goblin King slashed with his sword down toward Gowen.

A powerful wind blew as the sword descended. It was a slash brimming with speed and power, any human hit by it would surely be cut in half.

But Gowen dodged that attack with the smallest movement possible without either breaking his posture or slowing down. As Gowen approached the Goblin King in an instant, the Goblin King swung his great from the side.

The human soldiers in front of the goblin king cried when they saw the strength behind that attack.

“Nu!?”

But Gowen stopped that attack with the guard of his sword. It wasn’t just their bodies that were different, the weapons they used were different too.

Gowen had no choice but to get up close and personal with the king. By doing so, he was able to mitigate most of the strength behind that earlier swing.

A numb feeling still managed to penetrate Gowen, but he ignored it as his lips curved into a smile.

This close range was Gowen’s domain.

“Die!”

Gowen’s long sword tore the Goblin King’s armor, causing blood to spurt.

The Goblin King clicked his tongue and swung his great sword in response, but Gowen was able to nimbly get out of the way.

Unfortunately, not even goblins could slash behind them.

Gowen was able to retreat precisely because he went around the king.

Gowen attacked once more, but it was too shallow.

It was not able to fatally wound the Goblin King.

The red bear overcoat that the Goblin King wore was able to mitigate most of Gowen’s attack. When coupled with the damage Gowen incurred along the way, the remaining attack power was simply insufficient.

The Goblin King turned around and attacked Gowen. That attack had enough strength to completely lop off one’s arm from its roots, but Gowen managed to jump back in time, causing it to only leave a flesh wound.

Not wanting to give the Goblin King time to recover his stance, Gowen jumped back toward the king, then as he slipped through the Goblin King’s great sword, he thrust out his long sword for the Goblin King’s throat

“Ka!?”

Or at least that’s that Gowen intended, but unfortunately, before he could slip through the Goblin King’s great sword, the Goblin King forced his sword along the ground and slammed it into Gowen’s shoulder.

Due to being buried into the ground the attack barely had any cutting ability left, but it was still strong enough to break Gowen’s armor and reach his bones.

Gowen’s body sank as he came to a halt.

The Goblin King tried to finish him off, but Gowen took advantage of the period when the Goblin King raised his sword to aim for the Goblin King’s neck despite his broken shoulder.

“Nu!?”

But the one to cry was Gowen.

Gowen had gambled big in hopes of a swift victory, but unfortunately, it only led him closer to defeat.

Perhaps if his other arm were still functioning, things might have gone differently, but Gowen did not have the time to think about such things.

Gowen forced himself to send out that one thrust, but with his shoulder broken, he missed his mark and hit the Goblin King's shoulder instead.

"GURUuuUOoOOAA!"

The Goblin King's deciding attack descended right above Gowen's head.

Gowen swiftly concluded that he would not make it were he to try and pull back his sword, so he abandoned his weapon and jumped back.

Black flames passed right in front of his eyes.

When he landed on the ground, he tumbled and fell.

He was not able to dodge that last attack perfectly, and a deep crimson permeated his clothes in the area from his chest to his stomach, while his consciousness momentarily lapsed.

"The enemy commander has been defeated! Drive away the humans!" The Goblin King raised his great sword and encouraged his soldiers.

The battle was leaning more and more toward the goblins.

Doubt filled the western human army. Gowen's defeat to the Goblin King was a serious blow to their morale. The various platoons could only do their best to try and keep things under control.

"...Not, yet!"

When Gowen regained his consciousness he forced his quivering legs back up.

When the Goblin King saw that he approached the holy knight to finish him once and for all, but the spearmen that were quivering in fear just moments ago, found it in themselves to block the Goblin King.

"Protect Lord Gowen!" A platoon commander of the spearmen said.

The humans stepped forward even as they shook in fear.

The Goblin King sent their spears flying as he cut down one infantry after another, but the humans managed to take Gowen back.

Clicking his tongue, the Goblin King changed his plans.

The enemy commander was heavily wounded. It was time to collapse the enemy lines in one fell swoop.

Black flames burned on the Goblin King's great sword as he bellowed out a howl. "We're breaking through! All soldiers! After me!"

Any human that dared to stand before the Goblin King were preyed upon by his black burning great sword.

The Goblin King led the goblin army through the human soldiers like he was running through an empty field.

The humans were powerless before the ferocity of his monstrous charge.

The sight of the Goblin King smashing their spears and the great winds that blew with each swing of his great sword instilled great fear into the hearts of the humans.

Not to mention the soldiers that followed behind the Goblin King.

Gi Ga Rax rode on black-tiger-back to lead the imperial guards, while Gi Za Zakuend led the druids.

Like that a path was naturally created through the human army.

As the middle line completely collapsed, the battle swung completely toward the goblins' favor.

“...Lord Gowen!?”

The platoon commanders paled at the severity of Gowen’s wounds.

“...Ku!? What’s the situation?”

Despite his wounds Gowen still continued to lead the army.

“The goblins have broken through the middle line held by the infantry. At this rate...!” The messenger that had arrived spoke with a pained voice.

Gowen grit his teeth in regret. “Signal... the retreat.”

He forced his hurting body to give instructions. “Have the left... wing go around the north, while the west wing goes... around the south. Is the cavalry... well?”

The platoon commander nodded. “Presently, the cavalry is attempting to take the enemy from behind, but with the demihumans—”

Gowen cut the report midway and gave out orders. “Have the cavalry... and the chariots... support the retreat. Tell the supply platoon... to abandon all cargo... The archers are to... exhaust their arrows while... the others retreat. After that... they should also retreat.”

After breaking through the middle, the goblins would surely spread to the flanks next.

“In the worst case... At least have one of the flanks... retreat.”

The platoon commanders could only nod at Gowen’s heartless decision. Though they were also commanders who led soldiers, they couldn’t argue Gowen’s decisions.

“Ku...”

After Gowen finished giving orders, he passed out once more.

The platoon commanders nodded to each other with pale faces as they carried out Gowen’s orders.

“Call back the chariots, we’ll help Lord Gowen escape,” a platoon commander said.

The platoon commanders called back the chariots attacking Gi Gu, and had them bring Gowen away.

The magic platoon was left to support the retreating platoons.

“Retreat! Retreat!” A platoon commander said.

At that, the lines that the fearful soldiers have been defending until now crumbled in one fell swoop.

Gowen Ranid was a defensive person.

To retreat is harder than to advance, and to completely withdraw from battle is even more difficult.

Having the entire western army retreat without its commander, Gowen, was indeed not going to be easy.

Though the western army was able to retreat masterfully under Gi Gu’s nose in the last battle, that was only due to Gowen’s exceptional leadership skills.

The platoon commanders were no slouch themselves, but they did not have the ability to oversee the entire army like Gowen could.

As a result, the various platoons retreated individually instead of together.

Unfortunately, the goblins were not so kind as to leave that gaping hole alone.

Morale was at an all-time high due to the Goblin King leading, so when the goblins saw the human army retreating poorly, they pursued the various retreating platoons and hunted them like wolves preying upon sheep.

The running soldiers were struck down by spears and blown away by magic, while the fallen were skewered to ensure they were dead.

Of the goblins giving chase, the most zealous of them all was none other than the Man-Eater Snake, Gi Ba.

“After them! Don’t let even a single one escape!” Gi Ba inspired the normal goblins as he led them on a chase brimming with hate.

Every time the humans screamed and their blood bathed him, Gi Ba’s hate was satiated.

“More, kill, more! Kill them all!” Gi Ba was in a trance as he chased after the humans, but that mad chase eventually came to a halt.

“Goblin, die!” The cavalry that was tasked to support the retreating soldiers attacked Gi Ba, forcing him to grit his teeth as he helplessly watched the humans run.

The human cavalry only had 50 soldiers left, but they still supported their allies.

In the face of the cavalry’s spear, the goblins had no choice but to halt their pursuit.

Unfortunately, for the cavalry, that meant abandoning all hopes of escape.

“Admirable, humans!”

That was because their decision to support the infantry ultimately led to Hal and his iron legs to catch up with them.

Originally, Hal was going after the chariots, but when he saw the cavalry attacking the pursuing goblins, he dropped the chariots and went for them instead.

“Damn it, it’s them again! At our heels right at the very end!” Though they stood at the edge of death, the human platoon commander encouraged his soldiers as he raised up his spear. “Kill them! Let this battle honor Lord Corseo! Let them know our cavalry is peerless on the plains!”

The entire cavalry cheered at the platoon commander’s words. Their faith in their young platoon commander was unwavering as they followed him from behind.

“Onwards!”

The cavalry lined up their spears as they ran after their commander.

Hal raised his spear when he saw that. “Brave warriors of Paradua! Stake your lives on your spear! Bring death upon all who impede our path!”

The Paradua riders cheered at Hal’s words, and they rode after him from behind.

The Paradua riders assumed a wedge-shape formation as they rode for the human cavalry.

“Die, goblin!”

“—Got you!”

As the two commanders clashed, the human commander grazed Hal by the side, but Hal reached the commander’s neck.

“Onwards!”

As Hal’s voice resounded, the riders of Paradua rode even fiercer, and they annihilated the human cavalry. This was the western human army’s last resistance, and from here on, the battle became one-sided.

As the demihumans watched the humans retreat from the blood-dyed plains, they cried out victory with tears in their eyes.

“We did it! We expelled the humans! Are you seeing this, Harid!” Mido of the fang tribe called out the name of that ancient hero as he looked up to the heavens with the rest of his pack.

“Daizos! Gurfia! This is your... UOoOO!” The chief of the centaurs, Tianos, could not finish his sentence. He could only cry at the heavens.

The battle that would later be known as the Battle of Piena Plains ended in the goblins’ victory.

The goblin casualties numbered 400, while the human casualties numbered 1000.

It was indeed a hard-fought battle.

After the battle the heavily wounded Gowen retreated to the western capital, while the goblin army advanced toward the colonial city and the western capital.

Though the humans still controlled their territory, the rule of the Germion Kingdom was slowly being usurped by the goblins.

As the peaceful rays of the sun descended, the beginning of the month of Toura came.

Intermission: Pale's Lecture on the Adventurer's Guild

After leaving the Goblin King to set off on her personal journey, the blind Pale Symphoria traveled from Germion Kingdom to the Holy Shushunu Kingdom.

"Oh~... So this is Rishu, capital of the Holy Shushunu Kingdom," a young, aspiring adventurer said as a robed girl with a staff looked around her restlessly.

"They seem to accept all religions around here... Ah, it's the goddess, Zenobia's, symbol!" The little girl folded her hands in front of her modest chest and offered her prayers.

The young man wryly smiled and turned to Pale who was behind him. "Ms. Pale, do you come here often?"

"Yes, I've worked on many quests here." Pale nodded with reservation.

The young man's eyes twinkled as he nodded. "First-rate adventurers really are amazing!"

Pale could only wryly smile to those twinkling eyes as she changed the topic.

Pale met these two while she was hurrying to the Holy Shushunu Kingdom and ended up lending them a hand while they were fighting on the plains against some monsters. After that they decided to travel together.

"This city is where the first adventurer's guild was built. Right... Why don't we drop by that store over there and talk while we refresh ourselves." Pale pointed to the signboard of a grandiose restaurant fitting of a capital city.

"Oh, that..."

"Umm... I don't think we can afford to eat there."

The man and the little girl said as they glanced at each other.

Pale smiled. "Don't worry, it'll be my treat. Consider it my thanks for traveling with me."



The Holy Shushunu Kingdom was situated east of the Germion Kingdom.

Unlike the western Germion Kingdom that ruled with might, the Holy Shushunu Kingdom was a religious country.

Just as its name implied, which meant either forbearance or tolerance, the Holy Shushunu Kingdom has taken it upon itself to provide protection for all religions.

It didn't matter whether it was the greatest church of the continent, the worshipers of the ancestral god, Ativ, or the Kushain faith that worshiped a holy man, or the believers of the goddess of vengeance, Altesia, herself, or the adherents of the healing goddess, Zenobia. In the Holy Shushunu Kingdom all religions are accepted except for those that seek to harm others.

The Holy Shushunu Kingdom is also famous for its military might, which allows it to stand against other countries.

It is particularly famed for its army that focus on mobility on the plains, such as the mana guards (sorcerer cavalry), or the archer knights, who are directly under the royal family. As a country that boasts excellent mobility on the battlefield, it is undoubtedly one of the leading powers in the region.

Even the tyrannic Germion Kingdom has no choice but to acknowledge its strength and prefer a cordial relationship.

The Holy Shushunu Kingdom was also a key point when traveling, for south of it were the recently unstable free cities, north of it was the Kingdom of Orphen, wherein the Ivory Tower could be found, and east of it were the small countries that sheltered the elves: the small country, Fenis; the agricultural country, Guralio, and the iron kingdom, Elfa. Lastly, there was the Holy Kingdom Alsas and the Oceanic Kingdom Yalma.

As a kingdom connected to various kingdoms, the Holy Shushunu Kingdom naturally gained popularity among the guilds.

The adventurer's guild was established about 100 years ago under the proposition of the leader of the then biggest mercenary corps, the hero Guine Oren, to secure useful personnel and elevate the status of those who would be known as adventurers.

The adventurer's guild could be said to have been established mostly due to the cooperation of Guine and the heir of a great merchant by the name of Halbert Lark.

At that time, the merchant guild was founded and it monopolized technology and provided protection for its merchants. The merchants joined hands with the royal family and the nobles, and they monopolized the goods – namely, weapons, armor, foods, and processed essentials – and regulated their price.

In so doing, the merchant guild ended up pushing away all unaffiliated merchants from the city.

The nobles, the royal family, and the people in power worked with the merchant guild to hire craftsmen for cheap, and then sold the end products at a high price. They also hired mercenaries for cheap to gather ingredients from monsters to manufacture certain goods.

It was then that the 10-year war between the Holy Shushunu Kingdom and the great eastern kingdom, Ranserg, came to an end as the latter collapsed. After that the city overflowed with mercenaries, and many small countries began popping out.

It is said that the impetus for Guine's undertaking was the death of his friend who died while doing a job for the merchant guild.

The merchant guild's high-handed tactics deeply oppressed the people and brought chaos to society, so the hero, Guine, took it upon himself to use his connections to gather the wandering mercenaries and form the adventurer's guild.

As for why it wasn't called the mercenary guild, it is said that it was due to Guine's inclination for challenging new things.

Guine formed a contract of monopoly with the then rising merchant, Halbert, and opposed the merchant guild. Guine gathered craftsmen, ingredients, subjugated monsters, and in the end, even dabbled with the war mercs.

As for Halbert, he gathered the unaffiliated merchants and worked with Guine to go against the merchant guild.

The war between the merchant guild and the united front of Halbert and

Guine continued on for the next 10 years, when finally, the merchant guild waved its white flag.

They had no choice but to surrender, as there were many resources in unexplored lands that they could not get. Try as they might to offer large sums in exchange, the adventurer's guild always managed to get them first.

After 10 years the merchant guild and the nobles that worked with them were all ruined.

A certain influential person once threatened Guine to have the new fields vacated.

In response to that, Guine said, "Let there be war then. In 10 years you will fall under the might of our numbers."

The next day, 100 adventurers from that person's fief appeared before him to give him a piece of their mind.

It is said that noble quivered in fear and apologized.

Guine could get away doing such reckless things because many of the influential people were survivors of the 10-year war.

Guine literally used his body to protect many of the influential people in the frontlines, so he was not in a position that he would lose to some half-baked noble.

Guine had many war friends that money couldn't buy.

Another reason why the adventurer's guild stayed strong was because crushing the adventurer's guild would result in the mercenaries wandering the streets again.

Mercenaries always wielded their weapons, so them wandering around would cause public order to worsen. Because of that the people in power decided it was best to keep them off the streets to save on expenses.

Moreover, the adventurers under Guine were famous, for most of the famed mercs joined the adventurer's guild.

The One-Armed Mercenary, Yeots Garth; the Magic Swordsman, Hellberme; the Archer King, Falm Gastia; the Fire Wizard, Isaac.

With names that dazzled like the stars gathered under their banner, the adventurer's guild had a might that a mere noble's army couldn't compare to.

After the adventurer's guild defeated the merchant guild, they began working in every nook and cranny of the country.

They filled in for the country to do jobs it didn't have the manpower to spare. Of course, that meant more expenses for the people, but it was better than nothing.

Especially, the subjugation of monsters, though that in and of itself showed just how poorly the country was doing financially.

Other than that they also worked in various jobs such as developing lands that might be profitable, exploring dungeons, looking for missing children, or even the delivering of mail.

Eventually, the work of the adventurer's guild spread from the Holy Shushunu Kingdom to the nearby countries, such as Germion Kingdom, the small countries, the free cities... *etc.*

The monopoly contract with Halbert was called off after the adventurer's guild reconciliated with the merchant guild.

The adventurer's guild then worked with the new merchant guild through profitable endeavors such as selling them the spoils of the adventurers. Like this the two guilds grew together in a mutually beneficial relationship.

Presently, the adventurer's guild was a large organization that could be found in almost every country.

The main branch of the adventurer's guild was located in the best part of the merchant district of the capital city, Rishu.

"I-It's huge..." The young man said as he looked up in a daze at the building.

Pale wryly smiled. "It was originally made to oppose the merchant guild, so it was built like a fortress."

As the boy nodded, Pale led him and the girl inside.

Pale felt the two youths look on wide-eyed as they entered.

Pale quietly watched their surroundings. Thanks to the favor of the god of wind, her hearing was much sharper than normal, and she could easily visualize the surrounding area with just the sounds.

"The counter at the front should handle the procedures. I'll wait," Pale said before leaving the two to take a seat and listen attentively to the people around her.

Whether it was the hushed voices of the adventurers from the next table or the sound of equipment rustling, not a single sound escaped Pale's sharp ears.

Pale turned her attention to eavesdrop on the adventurers in the room.

"The Red King has been getting increasingly active recently. It seems the Dagger of Werbus has joined them too."

"That's a joke, right? An assassin clan (blood oath) is literally a blood oath."

"Word says the Red King is a ludicrously strong leader. On top of that, they brought first rate warriors and mages. With—"

"Ms. Pale!"

While Pale was eavesdropping, her name was suddenly called out. She looked up toward that voice.

"Ah, sorry. You're done registering?" Pale asked.

"Yes," the girl nodded.

"We should go find ourselves an inn first then. We can look for work afterwards," Pale said.

“Ok!”

Pale wryly smiled. It was like when she was still with the Elks taking care of the clan’s neophytes.

Pale left the guild with the two in tow and looked for an inn, when they found one, they paid for the room and left.

“Oh, right. When we were registering, they asked us what clan we were affiliated with. What’s a clan?” The young man asked.

Pale nodded. “There doesn’t seem to be any suitable jobs, so let’s talk at the guild for the meantime.”

They were looking for a job that would send them to the east. A mail delivery job would be most preferable, but things weren’t always so convenient, and there was also the issue of rank.

Also, since not even Pale could read letters off paper her ears, she had to ask the young man to read the contents for her, but she couldn’t find anything that suited the level of the two neophytes with her.

In the end, they couldn’t find any work and had no choice but to go back and eat at the inn.



The concept of clans was created about 40 years after the guild was established.

Adventurers frequently formed parties to hunt monsters, but cooperation was a difficult thing to achieve with strangers.

After 40 years only a few of the forefront founding members of the guild where left. Though perhaps it was more surprising was that there were still members from 40 years ago working in the same yakuza-like line of work.

The most important thing to when hunting monsters is the organization of the participating members and their roles.

Who will be the vanguard? What are their special weapons? What magic do they specialize in? How long can they last in battle?

At the time it was usually the most skilled of the adventurers who would lead the party.

One of the remaining founding members, Sergeid Harken, who was also known as the Supreme Spear, founded the first guild, Golden Toast.

He gathered the people who admired him and all the skilled adventurers regardless of age, then as proof of their alliance, they drank each other's blood.

The power of that clan was proven when the recently reclaimed land in the north suffered heavy casualties.

Sergeid led his Golden Toast to push through the scattered parties and stop the maddened orcs.

That was the impetus for the clan rush.

The most renowned clans are Leonheart, which accepts both elves and demihumans, and Valkyria, which is known to undertake a lot of merc job from various countries.

They aren't the only ones with over 1,000 members, but it isn't easy managing such big clans, so most of the clans are mid-sized.

The Swallow Clan that travel the world and undertakes many jobs, the Red Moon that works solely in the south, the recently rising Clan Alliance of the Red King, and the Elks, who are active in the east.

There are many clans.

Being able to participate in clans like these means that one is trustworthy.

Being trustworthy means being paid more.

The rank the guild gives isn't solely based on power. It just so happens that the guild can't trust people without ability, but that's true for all lines of work.

The rank given by the guild is really a measure of how trustworthy a person is.

In other words, it's their way of saying 'you can trust this person to get the job done'.

The ranks are normally divided into 5, ranging from A to E, but there is a special rank handed out by the guild, Rank S.

Even if someone has ability, if that person isn't trustworthy, he will only be an E Ranker.

Of course, there are exceptions.

The exception is when a person is affiliated with a clan.

An adventurer can undertake jobs of higher ranks based on the reputation of the guild he is affiliated with. If he fails, then the reputation of the clan will be affected, so their clan naturally won't make them do jobs that they can't do.

Another path one could take is by getting the recommendation of a country.

The guild is closely connected to the secrets of various human countries due to undertaking various jobs for them that may or may not be profitable such as merc work, monster subjugation, labor... *etc.*

If one can get a strong recommendation from such a country, then one can undertake jobs of a higher rank.

People trusted by the guild or people with high contributions to the country can also be summoned directly by the king.

The country who does that the most is the Germion Kingdom which has many unexplored territories.

Because of that the holy knight, Gulland, who came from the background of a mere adventurer, has become the goal and object of admiration of many adventurers.



There were 3 people walking along the road east of Rishu.

They had undertaken a job to exterminate the monsters of a nearby village.

"I'm going to become a hero!" The young man said full of zeal.

Pale was expressionless.

"Can you not say stuff a kid would?" The young girl sighed.

"Stupid, this is a man's dream," the young man said.

"I'm not stupid!"

Seeing the two frolicking, Pale couldn't help but wryly smile.

"How can I become a hero!?" The young man asked.

As Pale felt the wind caress her cheeks, she opened her mouth. "Hmm... You could try leading a charge. People who can do that well are often called heroes. If not, then at the very least, no one will call you a hindrance."

Pale recalled that time when she had just joined the clan. She remembered how Touri Nokia valiantly led them into the dungeon.

It was a dungeon that would make anyone think twice entering, but he valiantly led the party from in front.

He stood at the front precisely because it was dangerous. Pale saw that as something dazzling and noble.

"Let's hurry. It's just a monster extermination quest, but it'll become difficult should nightfall come. And besides, a bigger reward is better, right?"

The guild doesn't cover travel expenses. Everything is paid for by one's self, so travel expenses would have to be subtracted from one's reward. Naturally, that means the less one travels the more money one can make.

The two nodded as they followed Pale into the village.

Chapter 165: Battle in the Rain

After crushing the human forces, the goblins treated their wounded and headed east. It was evident from their actions that the Goblin King wished to conquer the western capital and quickly establish their dominance over the western region.

Their forces numbered roughly 900.

That was the number of soldiers they had left after subtracting the wounded and the soldiers that would be left behind to cover and treat them. The duty of watching over the wounded was given to Gi Gu, who himself was heavily wounded, while the king led the rest of the army east.

“Capture the humans that are still alive. If they resist, kill them.”

The king emphasized that the humans be captured. They were able to plunder the cargo that the human supply platoon abandoned and the elves were able to help them make use of them, so they could afford to keep prisoners.

The Goblin King wished to conquer the western capital in one fell swoop, but that would prove to be a difficult task.

For the harpy scouts were able to spot an army going west from the north. The Goblin King could only regret that his predictions were still too shallow.

The Goblin King thought they'd already won. He believed that even if reinforcements were to come, they would come much later, but reality turned out different.

What he defeated in the last battle was only the power of the western capital, and a new power has appeared from the north under the lead of the holy knight, Gulland. But there was not enough information for the king to understand what exactly was going on, so in the end, he mistook Gowen's forces to be a detached force sent to the colonial city.

“West, the colonial city, huh,” the king groaned to the heavens as he checked the enemy numbers and their distance.

They don't seem to have noticed them yet, but their forces numbered 500

and they were currently heading west.

If the colonial city were to suddenly gain reinforcements, they might be able to break the siege. Even if the humans fail to defeat the goblins, the goblins will still lose the opportunity to defeat the humans.

In the worst case, the western capital might become a much more fortified city. In that case, there would be a possibility of being attacked from behind.

But if they were to just let them go their way, they would be able to avoid suffering needless casualties. And should they manage to conquer the western capital, this area will fall to the goblins. Although, they would have to conquer it quickly, lest another wave of reinforcements arrive from the capital.

“It’s as if there’s a fish bone caught in my throat... No.”

Would this area really fall to the goblins just by conquering the western capital? The Goblin King became thoughtful again.

In the end, the king concluded that even if the western capital was conquered, even if this area fell into their hands, they would still have the problem of keeping it.

500 soldiers were coming from the north. The south was currently suffering distress due to the Kushain believers, but that shouldn’t be enough to keep them from sending reinforcements.

If the colonial city receives reinforcements, this area probably won’t fall to the goblins even if they do manage to conquer the western capital.

At this point, the colonial city has suddenly become a much bigger problem to the king. At first, he believed their morale would crumble so long as he could break Gowen’s forces, but if the capital were to receive one wave of reinforcement after another, the king’s predictions would not come true.

The difference in numbers between the goblins and the humans was leaning more and more toward the humans.

There was no point complaining now, so the Goblin King stopped idling and gave an order. “Maintain distance as we pursue the northern enemy. We will deal with the western capital later! All forces, turn around!”

They had to destroy the colonial city.

As long as the colonial city existed, the goblin won't be able to attack the west in perfect condition.

"Gi Ji! Take half your soldiers and scout the east! Take note of the defenses of the cities. As for the rest, have them scout the northern enemy!"

"As you command!" Gi Ji nodded, then he took his forces and left.

East of the Piena Plains was the western capital and the various towns connected to it. The king wished to find out the state of their defenses.

Once the northern army is defeated, the Goblin King would have to make a decision between moving east or conquering the colonial city.

As for which of those two choices he would be picking, that would depend on Gi Ji's information.



While the Goblin King was at a loss what he should do, Gulland led his army to the colonial city.

"If Gowen is going to meet the enemy, then..."

Gulland was yet to get word that Gowen's army had lost in the plains, so he formed his plan under the assumption that he would do well.

If he were in Gowen's shoes, he would surely push the goblins toward the colonial city. Thinking that, Gulland decided to go the colonial city and attack the goblins when they're tired.

Moreover, Gulland himself specialized in defense, so he would be able to take full advantage of the colonial city's defenses.

Gulland believed that Gowen would surely do that, so he ignored the western capital and led his army straight to the colonial city.

"Hmph, what a peaceful land."

Not a monster could be seen since they entered the western region; not even a bandit, in fact. That was of course thanks to Gowen's management.

Gulland wryly smiled as he thought of how big a contrast the western region

was to his northern region that was currently in war with the barbarians.

The body of the god of fire was already at its peak and was beginning its descent west.

“Tch... We haven’t progress much. Hey! Start making camp! Hurry!”

The northern army that Gulland led was inferior individually to Gowen’s western army. They only excelled in combat, other than that, even Gulland himself couldn’t deny that they were inferior.

Their army was a stark contrast to Gowen’s western army, which could move and make camp without leaving a single opening for the goblins to take advantage of. Gulland’s army could be said to be at the bottom of the barrel when it came to such things.

That being said, however, they were indeed a notch above Gowen when it came to power. At least, when the northern army was together.

As Werdna spread her wings, the twin red moon goddesses, Ervi and Navi, peeked through the rift in the clouds.

As the winds blew stronger, Gulland’s expression became cloudy.

“Tch, rain.”

The clouds flowing from the south would soon crash into the distant mountains of the snow god. Not long after, the twinkling stars and moons would be veiled behind dark clouds and rain would fall.

“Send a lot of soldiers to keep watch. It’s going to be a rainy night!”

If Gowen was the type to rely on instincts he’s honed through countless battles to make the decision to increase the number of guards, Gulland was the type to rely on his natural instincts.

Gulland entered his tent and closed his eyes. When the sound of rainfall reached his ears, he opened them again.

“Shit, it actually came.”

Cursing, Gulland lifted the curtain of his tents and went out.

The rain was still but a drizzle, but it was only a matter of time before it would

fall fiercely.

“Hah?”

Thinking he'd heard the sound of metal mixed with the sound of rain, Gulland walked through the camp despite the rain.

His shortly cut hair was already wet from the rain, so the trickling rain only made him even colder.

Gulland carried his Blue Thunder over his shoulders as he looked toward the darkest area under Werdna's wings.

When a shadow left that darkness, Gulland swung his blade.

“Hmph!”

“Gi!?”

After killing the goblin wielding a dagger, Gulland looked up.

“Oi, you bastards! Wake up! We're under attack!”

At Gulland's words, the tents of the camp flapped open simultaneously. Most of the soldiers have yet to get their equipment ready, but they all had their weapons with them.

Suddenly, battle cries resounded from the darkness.

“The goblins are attacking! Keep your wits about you and kill them all!” Gulland said as he wielded his Blue Thunder over his shoulders and smiled a ferocious smile befitting the leader of these ruffians.

“Yes, Sir!” The soldiers cried in response.

“Tch, it's dark!”

“Hey, burn some of those tents, so we can see something!”

Gulland's soldiers quickly began adapting to the darkness to fight.

“GURUuuuAAaaAA!!”

As light dispersed the darkness, a ferocious howl and cries from beyond the light of the burning tents resounded.

When the soldiers looked up, a soldier could be seen flying through the sky.

Eventually, it landed right before Gulland.

“I don’t know which bastard you are, but!”

As fury that could evaporate even the very raindrops themselves filled Gulland, he held the great sword in his hands and he cut down the burning tent, revealing the figure of a giant black goblin.

“I!”

As that goblin and Gulland recognized each other, they ran.

“OOOOoooOoOOAA!”

“GURUUuuUUOOOOOOOA!”

They ran like the wind as they took their great swords and swung them down.

The two swordsmen swung their weapons with enough strength to deal a fatal blow as they clashed against each other; the resulting impact sent the rain drops flying away.

“You’re... that monster!”

“Bastard!”

Swords locked, neither side backing down, their aura burst wildly.

Astaroth

“Ruler of wind and lighting!”

Enchant

“Turn me into a blade!”

Lightning filled Blue Thunder with its power, and it scorched even the very raindrops themselves as that power scattered.

Yet as strong as that power was, the black flames of the Goblin King did not waver, and they sought to devour the lightning itself.

As the two powers clashed, they scattered from the two warriors, spreading onto the battlefield around them.

Even the band of ruffians Gulland led were forced to run screaming despite their experience in war.

Those two powers were that powerful.

As the Goblin King attacked, the rest of the goblins followed suit and attacked the humans.

“My liege is fighting... We should watch over his duel, but...”

Gi Jii Yubu was unsure whether he should move his army or not.

“It would be better if you move your army. If the king can’t lead, then someone needs to take his place,” Gi Za Zakuend said. “If you’re not doing it, I will.”

Gi Jii was unhappy with Gi Za’s attitude, so he turned to Gi Ga Rax, but he didn’t say anything and merely watched Gi Za.

Helpless, Gi Jii raised his spear. “The darkness is our domain! Attack!”

At his behest, the goblins lined up their spears and attacked the humans hiding within their camp.

The goblins readied their weapons and calmly approached in formation.

The panicking humans did not know what to do. They fought individually and ran about like frightened mice.

Some of them would challenge the goblins from time to time, but they were quickly dealt with by the goblins’ line of spears.

“Gi Jii, leave the back open,” Gi Za said.

“Why? Wouldn’t it be better if we surround them?” Gi Jii asked.

“It’s easier to kill when the prey is running, right?” Gi Za smiled.

“I don’t think it’s advisable to underestimate humans,” Gi Jii replied, daunted.

“Caution is important, indeed; but if we’re too timid, we’ll miss an opportunity,” Gi Za said with a smile.

Gi Za called out to Gi Ga, who was riding on the back of his black tiger. “Let’s leave the front to Gi Jii, we can take the flanks.”

“...I don’t mind, but what about the tribes? Think they’ll agree?” Gi Ga Rax asked.

The goblins from the Gi Village and the tribal goblins had a sensitive

relationship. When the king was around, they were equals, but when he wasn't, the goblins become unsure how to proceed.

"I'll take responsibility. If the Gaidga demands it, I'll even offer my head." Gi Za looked Gi Ga in the eye.

"Fine, I'll bet on that resolve of yours! Gi Jii, the elves and the demihumans that can't see in the dark should wait at the back."

"R-Right!" Gi Jii replied.

"Let's have Lord Hal pursue the enemy. I'll inform him," Gi Ga said, then he turned to Gi Za. "I'll tell the Gaidga to take the left flanks."

"I'll take the right then," Gi Za said.

As Gi Za saw Gi Ga leave with his subordinates, he took his subordinates and moved out.

"...Inform the demihumans and the elves that they are to stand alert!"

Gi Jii, who was tasked with pressuring the humans from the front, held his spear tightly as he looked over the battlefield.

"Are they still out of reach?" He asked himself.

Just now, he didn't have the confidence to make a decision without the king.

Gi Jii felt small before someone as bold as Gi Za, who could nonchalantly offer his neck and assume responsibility.

Though he has led a horde himself, it seems the 1st generation, Gi Za, was yet out of reach. He would have to chase after his back for some time yet.

Neither the rain nor the battle was close to ending, but in the midst of all that was a goblin who held his spear tightly, frustrated at his own lack of power.



"GURUuuOOA!"

A great sword descended with enough strength to cut a human in two.

Gulland instantly understood that he could not take that sword directly, so he scooped up with his own great sword to deflect it.

He somehow managed to parry it, but it still left his hands numb, causing him to smile fiercely.

As the Goblin King's great sword hit the ground, Gulland, who had just lifted his sword, slashed down.

"ORAaa!"

This time it was Gulland who sent a blow with enough power to instantly kill. At that speed and at that distance, it was a blow that could surely cut a goblin in half, but the Goblin King received it directly.

That sword should have had enough strength behind it, but the result still made Gulland click his tongue.

As their swords locked once more, sparks erupted and the flow of ether illuminated their muddy feet.

"Fu!"

For a moment, when they locked swords, Gulland used the entire strength of his body to push back. When the Goblin King was pushed back, Gulland immediately twisted his body.

"Nu!?"

Gulland laughed inwardly when he heard the Goblin King's surprised voice. At the same time, he took advantage of the centrifugal force to land a blow when he had taken some distance. It was a blow sent only with his right hand, but it was headed for the Goblin King's throat.

But the moment the Goblin King saw Gulland's back, he immediately chanted.

Accel

"My life is like a cloud of dust!"

Immediately after, Gulland's body flew in the air.

"GAH!?"

That was the anguished cry of a man in pain.

Gulland was sure he'd landed a blow on the Goblin King, but for someone reason, he was the one flying.

He immediately fixed his posture midair. As he landed, the rainwater scattered from the impact.

The burning tents illuminated the Goblin King, and a wound could be seen extending from his shoulder. He was clearly bleeding, but his resolve to fight was not at all dampened.

“So that’s what happened... Monster!”

That was all Gulland needed to understand what had happened.

Gulland spat out his blood as he wielded his Blue Thunder again.

When the Goblin King had realized that he couldn’t dodge Gulland’s attack, he intentionally received his attack with his shoulder.

An attack aimed at someone’s neck works best only when it is able to land at that fatal spot; otherwise, its power would be greatly mitigated.

But while that made sense in theory, it was one thing to think it and another to actually do it. The fact that the Goblin King was able to make that decision in that instant proved that he had gone through death countless times.

Moreover, Gulland glanced at his hands.

Unlike that numbing pain from before, the pain in his right hand was burning, and it ran from his hand to his wrist.

He might have fractured a bone, Gulland thought as he held his great sword even tighter.

“I’ll kill you!”

Gulland’s breath burned as he exhaled. It was as if the raging fire within him was looking for a way out.

They had already exchanged over 20 blows.

The rain was gradually getting stronger, but the fire that was their battle only burned stronger.

Their duel aside, however, the overall state of the battlefield was leaning more and more toward the goblins. Gulland’s soldiers might excel at battle, but the goblins’ advantage in a night attack was just too great to overcome.

“Lord Gulland, we can’t hold!”

Gulland glanced at his subordinates and clicked his tongue.

“Damn it! If you run around like mice you’ll just get taken from the back. You bastards need to gath—!?”

Gulland wanted to give orders, but the Goblin King wasn’t about to stand and watch. As the Goblin King attacked, Gulland was forced to defend.

Having received the Goblin King’s attack flatly, a feeling of numbness spread all the way to his arms, and he was forced to cry out in pain.

“GURUUuuuAAA!”

The Goblin King sent one blow after another. As one blow landed on the ground, the Goblin King used the recoil to send a reverse slash on Gulland.

Gulland somehow managed to block it in time while retreating, but became he wasn’t able to control his strength, his posture broke and his sword went the wrong direction.

Gulland somehow managed to recover, but the Goblin King’s sword was already right before his eyes.

“GU!?”

Gulland tumbled on the mud as the Goblin King sent him flying. He tried to stand up despite feeling giddy, but the Goblin King’s black burning sword was already right at him.

“...”

His head dripping with rain, Gulland looked up at the Goblin King. If stares could kill, the Goblin King wouldn’t stand a chance.

“Where... did you take Reshia?”

“Ahh, that woman?”

As the Goblin King’s spirit slackened, Gulland looked for an opening.

“She’s probably moaning right about now, shaking those hips of hers for them nobles.”

“Bastard!”

Angered, the Goblin King raised up his sword.

But that action the Goblin King took in a moment of anger created a big opening.

Gulland took advantage of that.

Astaroth

“Ruler of wind and lighting!”

“Ku!?”

Three streaks of lightning flashed for the king’s body. The surrounding area grew bright as the king’s body was scorched.

The Goblin King ignored the pain with his anger and swung his blade, but Gulland was no longer there.

“...Son of a bitch! GURUuoOOAAAA!”

The king’s maddened cry vanished into the rain and the darkness.

That day, the northern army of 500 soldiers suffered heavy casualties.

In the end, their numbers were reduced to 100, while the goblins only suffered 50 casualties.

It was the goblins’ overwhelming victory, but the holy knight, Gulland, was still in good health.

Chapter 166: Plan

After defeating Gulland's forces with a night attack, the Goblin King treated the wounded while glaring at the west. The Goblin King was troubled. He was troubled about what Gulland said regarding Reshia, about the colonial city behind them, and Gowen's forces, which has gotten themselves some much needed time.

The Goblin King managed to defeat the enemy before them, but he couldn't ignore the country behind the human soldiers anymore.

"Your Majesty."

While in doubt, a voice called out to him. It was none other than the leader of the druids, Gi Za Zakuend.

"I have a plan to conquer the colonial city."

The Goblin King's eyes opened wide upon hearing that.

The druid did not seem to be joking. His face was as serious as ever, but the resolve could be felt from his words.

"...Let's hear it."

"We'll use the humans. Fortunately, we have some."

The king became thoughtful.

If the colonial city falls, enemy reinforcements will probably come in troves.

The goblins needed to attack here. And with Gowen wounded, there was no better time than now.

The Goblin King also considered that he would need to act fast if he was to challenge the powerful human kingdom.

If Gulland had caught wind of Gowen's defeat, he might have been able to avoid losing under their hands.

If he isn't able to defeat the western capital before enemy reinforcements

come, the battle will surely turn into a battle of attrition.

That was not a situation the Goblin King wished. Especially, considering the things to come.

Until now the king has never allowed anyone else to come up with a plan.

The Goblin King has always been leading the battles, and even the domestic affairs were handled solely by him.

Leaving things to others would worry him greatly, but...

“I’ll leave it to you then.”

This was the first time a goblin has offered his own opinion. Until now they have always blindly followed his orders.

There was no doubt about it, the goblins were changing.

When the king realized that, a faint breath left his lips, and he laughed.

“Yes, as for the plan, I intend to—”

“It’s fine, Gi Za. I’ll leave everything to you.”

This time it was Gi Za’s turn to be astonished.

The less people knew of something, the lower the probability something would be found out.

“Are you sure?”

“I’ll take responsibility. Just tell me what you need.”

“...Very well. Please wait for my report, Your Majesty!”

After hearing what he needed to hear, the Goblin King immediately let Gi Za go.

As he watched Gi Za leave, he noted that Gi Za was in particularly high spirits.

“I’ve been rushing... huh.”

The Goblin King admonished himself for his restlessness, then he looked up at the clear blue sky.

He just didn’t know what to do without Reshia around, but right now, he has

no choice but to believe. Besides, the battle last night showed the humans the might of the goblins.

From here on, the battle should progress a lot better.

After calming down, the Goblin king looked toward the west.

Gi Ji Arsil was out, so he ordered his unit to scout ahead without him. If the northern army is nearby, then this time, he will wipe them out completely



Ra Gilmi Fishiga and the goblins under him has tried to go over the walls countless times, but the enemy commander, Yuan, has managed to to spoil their plans every single time.

Gilmi was looking up at those high walls, frustrated, when a notice from Gi Za came.

“...Break the siege 3 days from now?”

“That’s what he said.”

Gilmi tilted his head upon receiving the message from the druid messenger.

“Is the king aware of this?”

“Everything has been left to Lord Gi Za.”

Gilmi closed his eyes and ruminated.

“...Fine. If that’s what the king has commanded, then so be it. A pity I could not conquer the colonial city myself.”

After Gilmi sent the druid his way, he ordered the people under him to cancel the siege.

“Are you sure about this?”

Unexpectedly, the one who couldn’t come to terms with the decision was the orc king, Bui.

He looked to be the peaceful sort, but apparently, that wasn’t the case when it came to humans.

“I have no intentions of going against the king’s decision. Perhaps he’s already

defeated the reinforcements and the siege is no longer necessary.”

That can't be, Bui thought.

The colonial city was a blade aimed at their throats. If enemy forces manage to make it here, that would be the same as letting the enemy stab them in the back.

Left alone, this would be a repeat of last time... Just what in the world is that Goblin King thinking?

In the end, Bui couldn't discern the king's thoughts, so he ordered his orc soldiers to break the siege.



Gi Za Zakuend believed it impossible to conquer the colonial city in a straight-up fight.

When it came to sieges, Ra Gilmi Fishiga, hero of the Ganra Tribe, was the most exceptional of the goblins.

The fact that even he couldn't conquer the colonial city meant that the only way to conquer it in a straight-up fight was for the king himself to take the helm. But doing that would waste the opportunity they've gotten after finally driving Gowen to a corner.

When he saw the king glaring at the west after defeating the human reinforcements, Gi Za finally resolved himself

Just like he told Gi Do, normally they only followed the king's orders, but sometimes someone else needs to lead. Now was such a time.

“Gi Do, I need your help.”

Gi Do had no idea what was going on, but before he knew it, he was made to act in front of the humans.

It is said that the human reinforcements will be coming soon from the south. Once that is defeated, the goblin forces will advance for the western capital.

It is said that since we have defeated the humans, we must take this time to recuperate. As such, there will be fewer guards in 3 days' time.

Gi Do said his lines in an utterly monotonous voice, causing Gi Za to curse in his heart several times.

Fortunately, the humans watching from the side did not seem to doubt anything and listened with rapt attention.

After leaving that place, Gi Za finally let out that pent up sigh at Gi Do's pathetic acting.

"...I-I told you I can't act."

But despite refusing with a pale countenance, Gi Do was still made to put on his act before another group of humans. Gi Za wanted him to do it a third time, but seeing the third-rate actor on his knees, he decided to let him off.

After thanking the unexpectedly cowardly Gi Do, Gi Za asked the king for the next things he needed.

His request was to have the druids be in charge of the human prisoners, permission to secure new prisoners, and the cooperation of the harpies and the Paradua tribe.

The king agreed to all three requests.

"Fine, but this is going to cost you," the first wing of the harpies, Yushika, said.

The harpies were resting when Gi Za called them. Gi Za gave them their orders and sent them their way, then he went to meet Hal of the Paradua.

"You wish to make use of us?"

"I'm aware that you've sworn fealty only to the king. I have received his orders and hope that you can cooperate with me."

Hal became thoughtful for a moment, but under the pressure of the words, the king's orders, and Gi Za's sharp glare, he eventually folded.

"Very well."

Gi Za bowed deeply upon seeing the goblin's quick response. He didn't even mouth a single condition.

"Thank you. I'm in your debt."

After the Gi Za got the information he needed from the harpies, Gi Za traveled

with Hal to a human village.

The Paradia surrounded the human village, allowing Gi Za to enter it.

“Eldest one, is the representative of the village around?” Gi Za asked the villagers hiding in their houses.

“...Damn it, a goblin! They followed us!”

When Gi Za saw the soldiers appear from the shadows with children following them, the corners of his lips curved, and he smiled.

He quickly knocked the soldiers out with magic, and then he occupied the village.

The commander of the colonial city, Yuan, frowned. It was already nighttime, yet not a peep could be heard from the monsters. It wasn't just him, the other soldiers also glanced at each other as they chatted among themselves, wondering what was going on.

The next day, when the body of the god of fire rose in the eastern sky, the guards noticed that the goblins were nowhere to be seen.

“Did they leave?” A soldier muttered, unbelieving.

But not long after, reality finally set in. The monsters were indeed gone.

“We won! We drove them away!” A soldier cheered.

Like ripples on still water, that cheer spread throughout the colonial city, and soon everyone was celebrating.

Soldiers, adventurers, and even the farmers... Every one of them rejoiced upon hearing that the goblins were gone.

The commander, Yuan, himself was not an exception.

He heaved a sigh of relief. He had finally completed his mission.

Despite that though, he still walked atop the high walls and ordered the soldiers in charge of observing the enemy to remain in their posts.

Around the time when Yuan was near the eastern the walls, one of the soldiers called out to him.

“Commander! People dressed like soldiers are being chased by the goblins from the east!”

A shadow quickly fell on those happy faces.

Yuan went up a stand and looked toward the east.

There he saw 3 or 4 people that looked like soldiers being chased by 10 goblins.

“Soldiers! To your stations! Prepare to open the gates! Long bows, prepare to shoot! Spears, gather at the eastern gate! The enemy is few in number! Close the gates as soon as our comrades enter!”

After giving those orders in an instant, Yuan looked toward the approaching goblins again.

“Send a messenger to the west. Tell them that the goblins are moving through the forest and should be disposed of quickly!”

Yuan sent a messenger, then he went to confirm that there were no goblins attacking from the flanks.

There was one red goblin mixed with the approaching goblins, but other than that one rare, everyone else was of the normal class. Yuan decided to save his comrades and disperse the goblins.

“Archers, draw, release!”

At Yuan’s behest, the long bows drew their arrows and released them simultaneously.

Several goblins fell, then as the goblins cried they began to retreat.

“Archers, prepare to shoot, open the gate! Let our comrades in!”

At Yuan’s behest, the iron-reinforced gate opened with a dignified sound. After the soldiers entered, Yuan ordered for the gate to be closed.

“The goblins seem to have retreated...”

“Keep watching. I’ll go meet our friends.

After telling the soldiers to keep watching, Yuan went down the walls to see the soldiers they saved.

“Are you alright!?” Yuan asked.

“Y-You have to move out now!” The soldiers said frantically.

“What are you saying!? We just finished driving away the goblins!” The spear platoon commander said in response to the panicking soldier.

“Calm down. First, tell us your affiliation,” Yuan said as he forced his way through.

When the soldiers saw him, both the spear platoon commander and the unknown soldiers calmed down.

“W-We are the survivors of Lord Gowen’s Army’s 3rd Platoon!”

“Survivors...!?”

Those meaningful words caused Yuan to draw cold sweat as he braced himself for the worst.

“It can’t be... Did Lord Gowen...”

“About 5 days ago, Lord Gowen fought with the goblin army in the plains. The fortunes of war were not with us and we lost!”

Everyone sitting nearby listening felt a shock jolt through them.

“...How is Lord Gowen?”

“He is heavily wounded and is being carried back to the western capital.”

“He is still alive, right?”

“At the very least, before we were captured, he was...”

As the soldier answered despite losing his bearings, Yuan groaned.

“...Tell me. What is the reason that we must leave our post?” Yuan asked after sparing a moment for Gowen. There was a solemnity to his voice.

“We were taken captives after our battle on the plains of Piena. During that time we overheard the goblins talking. The reinforcements led by Lord Gulland from the north have also been defeated. The monsters are currently on their way to fight the southern army.”

This new piece of intel caused Yuan to feel giddy.

“The Storm Knight lost...”

As Yuan came to terms with that grim news, the soldier quietly nodded.

“Do you know which general is coming from the south?”

“No,” the soldier said as he looked down at the ground.

Yuan nodded to the downcast soldier.

It was not something he could blame him for.

“But be that as it may, holding the fort here won’t stop the goblins from invading. Commander Yuan, please rendezvous with the southern army and subjugate the goblins.

Gowen’s army lost, even the northern army lost. All that was left now was the southern army.

“So the only reason they broke the siege was because... they no longer needed it.”

As Yuan glared hatefully toward the Forest of Darkness, he looked after the soldiers.

“Give me some time to think.”

As the soldiers resumed their watch, Yuan went back to his room to gather his thoughts.



Gulland’s forces suffered a crushing defeat under the goblins’ surprise attack, and both fear and the pain of defeat was etched into their hearts.

The northern army Gulland led stood proudly as one of the strongest.

The soldiers carried that pride with them and it greatly bolstered their confidence, but that pride was easily crushed in the battle with the goblins last night.

They were attacked by goblins, the weakest monster, and were almost wiped out.

They were the northern army that stood proud as one of the strongest, were

they not?

Gulland had no choice but to accept their loss and acknowledge that the goblins had a huge advantage in the night, but he didn't want to go back like this, so he told the soldiers that they would be heading back to the west.

"Listen up you bastards! I wanna see which one of you is stupid enough to go actually go back like this! If we go back now, our names will forever be immortalized in the annals of our country's history as the army that lost to some fucking goblins! Your sons, the sons of those already dead, and the sons of those sons... your kin, your entire lineage, will forever carry with them the shame of our defeat today! They will forever be branded as the weaklings who lost to the likes of goblins!!"

The soldiers were depressed after losing to the goblins' surprise attack, but Gulland's word lit a flame in them.

"Is this the northern army!? If our violence is taken away, all that's left is a bunch of losers! Do you know why other armies make way when they hear our name!? Because we're strong!"

As Gulland continued his speech, more and more soldiers began to raise their head.

"What will be left when the fight is taken from us!? I'll be the first to admit it! Nothing! Not one fucking thing will be left! If you understand, stand up! Thugs of the north! What is your profession!?"

A platoon commander stood up and drew his sword.

"We are the kingdom's elite, the northern army!"

"OU!" The soldiers bellowed in response.

Strength had undoubtedly returned to the soldiers' eyes.

At that, Gulland led the army west.

The goblins were bound to set their sight on the western capital anyhow, so Gulland decided to plan accordingly. A fierce smile appeared on his lips.

"Things won't go your way this time... goblins."

Gulland licked his lips as he chased after the goblins' image.

"This time you were the hunters, but next time, you'll be the prey."

Gulland's northern army was much smaller now, but its fangs were as sharp as ever.



Yuan passed the night unable to sleep. He stayed in his room all alone as he thought to himself.

Should he fight with the southern reinforcements and subjugate the goblins, or should he remain faithful to his orders and defend the colonial city?

The western capital was lightly defended.

It was built on a land where the monsters that once inhabited it were all exterminated.

Humans are creatures that adapt to their surroundings.

The people of the western capital did not see monsters for a long time. Because of that they abandoned defense for convenience, and Lord Gowen himself did not try to stop that trend.

The western capital was at the center of the western region when it came to agriculture. The more land was cultivated, the more merchants and farmers would come. The merchants would bring with them guards, and sometimes, new dungeons would be found as the city expanded, bringing adventurers to the city.

As the population increased, so did the number of houses.

Not long ago, the city broke down its walls to expand its borders.

Presently, the western capital did not have any walls.

On top of that there were many inn towns and farmer towns along the way to the city from Piena Plains. Fortunately, the goblins chased after the northern army and ended up west, but if they go east, they are bound to cause much damage.

Most of the soldiers' families live in those farmer towns and inn towns.

He can't abandon them.

Be that as it may, there were also people in the colonial city that needed to be protected.

"What should I do..."

Yuan grit his teeth as he slammed his head into the wall.

Try and try as he might to think, no answer came. No, there wasn't a right answer in the first place.

"Garrison Commander!"

As the door slammed open, a messenger entered.

"What's wrong!?"

Yuan inadvertently yelled with bloodshot eyes, but the messenger did not have the leisure to be concerned about him.

"The western capital has lit its beacon!"

"...!"

Yuan brushed aside the messenger and climbed up the walls to confirm the beacon for himself.

"We, are in good health, but... our numbers are few. Rendezvous at Graheinanite," Yuan said as he deciphered the beacon, then he muttered to himself. "This is what I should do, right, Lord Gowen?"



Along the road between the western capital and the colonial city was a town with a beacon.

"I've lit the beacon... You'll spare our family now, right?" A soldier asked Gi Za with a dejected face.

"If it works," Gi Za said.

The human drew cold sweat.

"This isn't what we agreed on! You said you'll save my daughter as long as I light the beacon!"

“How are we to know you didn’t betray us and light a fake beacon?”

A Paradua goblin suppressed the human soldier that tried to act violently.

“This is the right beacon, there’s no doubting it! But that doesn’t mean those bastards from the colonial city will move!”

“...Then pray. Pray to your gods that the commander of that colonial city will move.”

Gi Za had long confirmed before even the battle with Gowen that the beacon was lit east of the colonial city. At first, he wasn’t sure what the different colors meant, but it didn’t take him long to figure out that they were a sign of some sort.

The strategy book he received from Falun mentioned that the humans once used beacons to communicate over long distances.

Gi Za had sent the harpies to look for a deserter from Gowen’s army to look for someone who loved his family and was not loyal to Gowen.

Gi Za didn’t know this, but fortunately, that soldier happened to be one of the people in charge with communication. If not for that, Gi Za would have just killed him on the spot.

The goblins found such disloyal people to be disgusting.

Gi Za himself did not understand love.

But even if he did not understand it, he could study it. And from that, he knew that he could use it to move humans.

“Now, how will you move.”

Gi Za narrowed his eyes as he looked toward the west.



Gi Ba evolved to noble lv. 3.

Rashka evolved to lord lv. 1.

Chapter 167: War at the Western Capital I

After Ra Gilmi Fishiga broke the siege, a messenger came from the king, asking them to attack again.

The messenger was a member of the harpy tribe, so it could be seen how urgent the message was.

Gilmi had his questions, but they were asked to attack without question during the night.

“Are we really going to attack without any explanation?” The orc king, Bui, asked.

“What else can we do? Go against the king’s order?” Gilmi said.

“No, but...”

Bui looked up at the soaring castle walls.

“We have to do it. We believe in the king more than anyone else.”

“...Is that so?”

Gilmi glanced at Bui, who was still confused, but he didn’t say anything.

They were both exceptional commanders, so it wasn’t easy for either of them to just quietly obey.

Gilmi knew very well what he was carrying on his back, so he didn’t say anything.

“Lord Gilmi, can you leave the vanguard to us?” Nikea of the araneae interjected.

“I don’t mind, but...”

Are you sure? He asked with his gaze.

Nikea shrugged. “Someone has to fill that role anyhow, so we might as well take it. We’ve already gambled everything on your king. It’s only right for us to quietly obey his commands.”

“Thank you,” Gilmi bowed.

Nikea shook her head. “Besides, this is a good opportunity for us. There is no better opportunity than this to show the king our unwavering faith.”

Nikea stood imposingly with her arms crossed. Her powerful gaze questioned Bui and Gilmi’s loyalty. If you believe in the king, then you should obey, her eyes seemed to say.

“...Of course, that is how it should be,” Gilmi said, to which Bui also nodded.

The hero of Ganra, Gilmi, carried the fate of the tribe on his shoulders. Bui similarly carried the fate of the remaining orcs on his. Each one of them had their own reasons, but they all had one thing in common, they needed the king.

That was the same even for the demihuman known as Nikea.

Unless they are able to shave away the growing influence of the humans, they have no future. This wasn’t the time to argue because of one’s personal feelings.

“We’ll attack as soon as preparations are complete. Lord Nikea, we’ll leave the vanguard to you.”

That night Gilmi and his forces conquered the colonial city.

Without its main army, the colonial city did not have the strength to resist the goblin-demihuman coalition.



The Goblin King did not bother to wait for the harpies’ report on the colonial city. He’d already taken his army and departed for the east by the time the city fell.

The Goblin King believed in Gi Za, so to him, the colonial city was already theirs.

As the goblin forces traveled east, the werewolves and the centaurs surrounded the villages along the way and conquered them.

The goblin army did not pay attention to the north or the west as they traveled, they focused their attention solely on the east and the south in order

to defeat the army of the colonial city and the southern reinforcements.

After a day of travel, Gi Ji Arsil's unit came back from the east. The king had sent him previously to scout the western capital, and now he has returned to report his findings.

"The biggest city of the humans only have short walls."

Gi Ji believed they could easily conquer the city should they attack, but he didn't mention that to the king. He did not wish to say needless things and inadvertently muddle the king's thoughts.

Gi Ji nonchalantly reported the facts. As he concluded his report, he reported about the southern reinforcements that have finally reached the western capital.

"The southern reinforcements, huh..." The Goblin King said as he praised Gi Za for his efforts, then he dismissed him. "We have to move quickly."

The Goblin King believed the only path to victory was to crush all of their enemies, so he ordered the goblins and the harpies to put more effort in scouting as he led the army deeper into the east and prepared for the upcoming battle.

"Gi Gu should be taking refuge, but..."

The only worry the king had was Gi Gu, who was moving with the wounded soldiers. They are supposed to move west as soon as their injuries have been treated, but while there was supposedly little chance of them encountering any humans, there was no telling what might happen.

The soldiers that holed themselves inside the colonial city were by no means strong, but Gi Gu and his men were wounded, so they might have a hard time with them.

Be that as it may, the Goblin King couldn't ask them to head east either, as there was a high chance they would end up wasting too much time if they had to wait for them. The king had no choice but to believe in them.

Only a day and a half's distance was left until the western capital.



“Lord Gi Go,” a girl said as she tugged on Gi Go’s sleeves.

“Mu?” Gi Go Amatsuki said as he turned around.

Apparently, there a big gap had formed between him and the yugushiva.

“Sorry, but can we slow down a bit?” The girl asked with much embarrassment.

She found her lack of strength a shameful thing.

“It’s not your fault, Mr. Gi Go was really going too fast,” Yoshu said, gasping, after finally catching up.

Gi Go nodded. “Sorry, I didn’t notice.”

Gi Go had gathered the elite of the yugushiva to form a platoon of 30 soldiers. He was currently leading that platoon down to the south.

As for the rest of the yugushiva, they took shelter somewhere deep into the mountain range to avoid the northern army. Gi Go only took with him the best to participate in the king’s battle.

The yugushiva army had gotten some good results against the northern army using guerrilla tactics. At the very least, the tribe now had enough food to pass the winter.

Yoshu was the one who came up with the plans, but it was only thanks to Yustia’s leadership that they were able to pull it off. The reason the yugushiva were subservient was also because they revered her.

It was also thanks to them that Gulland couldn’t make it in time to aid Gowen. Their relentless harassment was not easy to deal with, and it made gathering the necessary resources for the trip south a big headache.

It wasn’t until Gulland left that the Yugushiva finally stopped their attacks and began their journey to the south. That was because Lili finally gained control of the northern army and started to defend against their harassment.

Lili was able to fortify the defenses of the north by building stronger walls and increasing the number of soldiers patrolling.

Yoshu was greatly troubled by Lili’s strategy, and he couldn’t help but wryly

smile and complain. No matter how strong and quick the yugushiva soldiers might be, in the end, they were still too young.

Neither Yoshu nor the village elders wanted to push them too hard either, as they carried with them the future of the village.

Since their guerrilla tactics no longer worked and Gulland himself had already left, they decided to leave and head south themselves.

The yugushiva were much better at traversing the mountainous area compared to flatlanders, but there were still 30 of them, so they had to take care not to be found by the northern army.

As a result they ended up taking the route Gi Go had taken to reach the snow god's mountains. Among the thirty yugushiva people accompanying Gi Go, a good number of them had never left the north, so they couldn't help but look curiously at the new environment. That didn't last long, however, as they gradually found their hands too full to play tourist.

That was because they couldn't keep up with Gi Go, who was a duke class himself.

The young boys and girls of the yugushiva walked ceaselessly, heaving and puffing as they did, but not a single one of them cried nor uttered a word of complaint. They did their best for Yustia's sake.

Though their numbers were few, a powerful platoon was heading south.

When Gowen returned to the western capital unconscious and heavily wounded, the reaction of the people was so grim it could not be put into words.

The army, in particular, were quite shaken by the events. The absence of both their commander and vice-commander caused them to panic.

Of those present, some suggested to fight to the bitter end, while others suggested to open a path and let at least Gowen escape.

If the knight-commander, Corseo, were still alive, the soldiers probably wouldn't have fallen into such a state.

The platoon commanders were strong warriors in their own right, but they did not have the ability to bring everyone together. With that, Gowen's army

could only fall into the crucible of discord.

It didn't take long for the soldier's unrest to spread to the people, but it wasn't like they actually had a choice.

Even the rich merchants, who tried to run to another city, couldn't because the soldiers, who wanted to fight to the death, stopped them. Like ripples rippling off each other, the city fell into chaos.

That chaos continued even after the southern reinforcements led by Sivara arrived.

The people were already panicking even with the beacon between the colonial city and the western capital lit, so they naturally cared little for their arrival.

"I take it messengers have been sent to the capital?"

The Ripper Knight, Sivara, stood in place of Gowen, who was still unconscious.

Gowen's staff could only hang their heads in shame to Sivara's question.

Immediately, a messenger was sent. The north and the south already knew that the goblin threat had gone out of control, but by the time King Ashtal received word, the Goblin King was already at their throat.

The goblin army defeated the northern army and advanced southwest. The colonial city was only a day's distance away, so it did not take long for Yuan's army to meet the goblins.

Unfortunately for them, with the evolved Rashka and Gi Ba leading the army, they only ended up being driven away to the east of the western capital.

The goblins pursued the retreating soldiers. Like this the Goblin King managed to advance to the western capital.

The forces led by the Goblin King numbered 800, while the humans now also only numbered 800 due to losing too many times. Sivara watched the approaching goblins from the top of the spire and groaned.

"They sure are organized," he said.

The goblins were dressed in leather armor and equipped with spears of the

same length. They advanced steadily.

Standing at the vanguard was Gi Jii Yubu's army.

Seeing the goblins move naturally with near perfect coordination left Sivara's common sense in tatters.

"...Perhaps they're stronger soldiers than humans."

As Sivara watched the approaching army, he noted a black goblin that stood out from the rest.

"Is that the leader of the horde?"

Sivara brushed his golden hair up and wryly smiled.

"Monster hunting is supposed to be Gulland's specialty... Sigh, did I end up pulling the short the end of the stick?"

Sivara grumbled as he smiled bitterly. Just a little, he was envious of Jize, who was probably currently buried in a mountain of documents.

"...Without Lord Gowen leading the army, that monster needs to be stopped. If not, this capital is hopeless."

Only the big merchants were able to run from the western capital. They ran to the main capital as soon as the western capital calmed down after Sivara arrived.

Unfortunately, the rest of the citizens couldn't just run and leave behind for fear that they would only starve to death without their livelihoods.

Because of that Sivara was forced to make a difficult decision.

He knew he was at a disadvantage, but there was no other choice but for him to go out himself. After all, the walls were short, there was literally nothing stopping the goblin army from marching into the city.

He was a holy knight. It was his duty to protect the people.

"Gather everyone, we need to talk."

Sivara called for a war council. Attending that was Gowen's company commanders, the commander of the colonial city, Yuan, and the commanders of the southern army. Sivara proposed to fight the enemy outside.

“I’ll take the southern army with me and bring the battle outside. While the goblins’ attention is focused on me, the western army should help Lord Gowen escape.”

The ever gentle Sivara nonchalantly proposed his plans, but contrary his tone, it was a cruel proposition.

Moreover, the one taking on the most dangerous role was none other than Sivara himself.

The commanders of the western capital were speechless.

“No, we can’t lose you now, Lord Sivara. That would prove too great a loss to the kingdom, I should be the one to go.”

It was none other than Yuan, who had been tricked by the goblins, who said that.

“That’s an attractive suggestion, but you can’t win against that goblin, can you?” Sivara said.

“That’s...”

“Just watch, I’ll show you the true power of the Ripper Knight. So, with that, the southern army shall be taking on the riskier role. Dismissed!”

“Yes, sir!” The western platoon commanders hit their chest as they showed agreement.

Of the seven holy knights in the Kingdom of Germion, the most popular and most skilled commander was none other than the veteran, Gowen.

After him was the hero who rescued the saint, Gulland; and then, for other reasons, the Ripper Knight, Sivara.

Sivara did not have Gowen’s aura nor did he have some special achievement like Gulland, but he was popular among the young soldiers.

His easygoing personality made it easy for others to connect to him. In fact, he’s so easygoing that others call him Marriage Killer. Of course, that’s without malice.

He also wasn’t the sort to expose his soldiers to unnecessary risks. Because of

that he garnered a popularity unlike that of Gowen or Gulland's.

It was that same person who gave the southern army a difficult task.

"We'll assume a 3-stage length and width formation in the following order: spears, cavalry, archers."

The western capital was surrounded mostly by level fields.

With the harvest still in season, the wheat fields stood tall.

A gust of wind blew from the south, passing over the bountiful wheat fields as the goblins and the humans confronted each other.

"...Still beats not doing it."

At Sivara's signal, a beacon was lit in the western capital.

"Please make it in time."

Sivara fixed his iron helmet over his head and mounted a well-statured steed. That was not a horse but a monster with three eyes known as happy lion.

"Spears at the ready!"

A sharp light reflected from the spears of the southern army. It sought to pierce the goblins itself.

"Cavalry, ready to charge!"

The goblin formations expanded toward the flanks, suggesting that they wanted to surround them. The leader of the goblins was at the center.

"Let's show these monsters how the southern army fights! Spears, closed formation!"

The spears closed in on each other and hid behind their shields as they readied their spear.

"First is defense! Spears, advance one step!"

The curtains on the western capital war was lifted at Sivara's command.

Chapter 168: War at the Western Capital II

The Goblin King led the goblins to try and surround Sivara's army.

He decided to do that because he saw how small Sivara's army was. Unlike the other battles, this time the time was on the humans' side.

With the reinforcements coming from the capital, the impending comeback of Gowen, and the fact that the goblins have already taken over a portion of the human kingdom, it was hard to imagine how the countries of the continent would react.

The odds were low, but there was a chance that they might unify to fight off the goblin threat.

Looking at it long term, the goblins may have the advantage when it comes to raising soldiers, but there were too many people in the human side who could overturn the difference in army strength.

For all those reasons, the Goblin King decided to attack swiftly. He ordered Gi Jii Yubu and Rashka of Gaidga to advance. At the same time, he ordered the Paradua and the demihumans at the flanks to also advance.

They didn't have the time to wait for the detached force that attacked the colonial city.

"Attack! Let these humans know they are no longer the strongest!"

The goblins and the demihumans answered to the king's call, the elves also fought fiercer.

The battle demon, Gi Jii's army, which was attacking from the front, could allow the Gaidga to exhibit their full strength when they lined up their spears evenly with the soldiers in front. Like that they overpowered the human soldiers that tried to defend with their shields.

As the human forces were gradually pushed back, the Goblin King finally felt some resistance.

The way the battle was progressing, the goblin army would end up pushing the human army into the city walls. At that point, the human army shouldn't be able to keep its formation.

Moreover, with the swift Paradua and demihuman armies attacking from the flanks, the humans will quickly find themselves strangled.

There was no need to fear the enemy's archers, as the druids and the elves at the back made sure they were no threat.

"We should win if we keep this up, but..." The Goblin King muttered to himself as he watched the enemy army.

Complacency is forbidden.

Human persistence and tactics was not something the goblins could match.

"Don't hold back! Finish the enemy!"

Though the war raged feverously, the Goblin King calmly encouraged his soldiers and waited for an opportunity to enter the fray.



The southern army led by Sivara that was being one-sidedly pushed back was now gradually trying to change their formation as they defended.

The knights positioned at the center split into three groups to deal with the nimble enemies attacking from the flanks.

The archers waiting at the back had their hands full defending against the enemy mages, but that wasn't a problem. After all, from another perspective, the enemy mages essentially had their hands full suppressing the archers, so it could be said that the archers were doing their job well.

Sivara was paying careful attention to the time since the beacon was lit.

The success of his plan depended on it.

"The goblins really are better than we expected."

Sivara had his aide order the infantry to gradually pull back. They had already expected the battle to progress like this since the war council.

Since they expected it, naturally they had a way to deal with it.

Sivara ordered the soldiers to conserve their strength, but the goblins' commander was a lot more annoying than they expected.

If they were only blindly attacking, they wouldn't be a match for the human army, but the fact that they could not just think but also fight with discipline put the physically weaker humans at a disadvantage.

The difference in individual strength between the nameless soldiers weighed heavily on Sivara's shoulders.

"...They sure are hurrying."

Sivara smiled as he ordered the infantry to pull back even more.

Any more than this and they will be hitting the city walls. At that, their formation will surely crumble.

The city walls were indeed short, but they were still as high as a human adult's shoulders.

If the archers positioned at the back were to lose their focus, the enemy arrows will come raining down.

Sivara, who could no longer pull back, drew cold sweat as he looked toward the back of the goblin forces.

Hopeful, he looked toward the distance, and when he saw clouds of dust moving, he called out.

"Messenger! Tell the infantry to open up!!"

As Sivara swung the halberd in his hands, a gust of wind brushed his golden hair.

At Sivara's behest, the human soldiers that have been holding back until now have finally started to push back against the goblins.

They moved from the center to the flanks, forming a figure like the 八 (hachi/eight) character.

When Sivara saw that they were ready, he called out once more.

"The time has come! Tear these goblins into pieces!" Sivara said as he swung his halberd.

The cavalry that fought at the flanks remained where they were, while the elite cavalry had been waiting at the center all this time. They were few in number, but they were handpicked by Sivara himself, the elite of the elite southern army.

“Clear the way for Lord Sivara! Push back the goblins!”

“OU! OU!”

The infantry platoon commanders moved from the center to the flanks and pushed against the goblins there. They had not merely been defending all this time, they also aimed for the boundary line between Gi Jii’s army and the Gaidga, concentrating their attacks there.

As the reserves waiting at the back entered the fray, the center finally opened up just as Sivara had intended.

Try as one might to assume a length and width formation, in the end, there was bound to be some gaps between allies.

Looking from above, the formation the Goblin King had laid out might look like a standard length and width formation, but if one looked from the center, it looked more like a split.

“Assault team, after me! Let us claim the Goblin King’s head and bring peace to these lands!”

As Sivara whipped his happy lion, it bolted forward and shook the earth. The steeds of the cavalry that followed from behind were indeed inferior to the happy lion, but they were also amazing specimens in their own right.

Fight! Fight! Fight!

The assault team that followed from behind shouted as they moved.

“Ku... My liege!?”

“Bastards!”

Gi Jii cried out while Rashka grit his teeth as they watched the humans pull off an almost miraculous turnover that allows them to immediately penetrate the center.

With goblins in the way, they were both powerless to stop Sivara.

Sivara easily pushed through the goblins in front of him.

He would swing his halberd, sending goblins flying through the air, and the happy lion would crush them underfoot.

As Sivara opened a hole, the cavalry following from behind sought to expand it.

“Stop him! Imperial guards, after me!”

It was the knight-class goblin, Gi Ga Rax, who stood before Sivara. He ordered the imperial guards, who prided themselves as the wounded ones, to turn around and clash against Sivara’s cavalry.

“We’ll force our way through! Scatter them!”

As Gi Ga and Sivara passed each other, spear and halberd crossed, giving rise to sparks.

“Tch!”

It was Gi Ga who clicked his tongue.

Sivara did not slow down in the slightest as he rode to claim the Goblin King.

Gi Ga tried to turn around, but unfortunately, the spears of the cavalry were there to greet him.

Somehow, he managed to dodge them and regain his footing, but Sivara had already left him in the dust.

The Goblin King was now within his reach.

“Arrgh!!!”

Gi Ga led the imperial guards and chased after Sivara.

The threat had already reached the back by the time they noticed the change at the frontlines.

“Goblin!”

“Bastard!”

Sparks erupted as the two great swords clashed, black flames and lightning

dancing into their surroundings.

Gulland's army of approximately 100 had taken the goblins by surprise. Sivara lit the beacon and endured until now all for the sake of making Gulland's surprise attack a success.

The harpies didn't see them coming due to the camouflage they wore that blended their body with the grass and the trees. By the time they did notice them, it was already too late.

Gulland and his men attacked fiercely to clear themselves of the shame of their previous defeat.

The Goblin King had already noticed the change in the frontlines, but they needed to deal with Gulland, or the entire army would fall, so he fought Gulland's army with the elves.

"Gi Za support the frontlines! Felbi, engage them in close combat!"

"Understood! Back row, swords at the ready! Front row, shoot the enemy while pulling back!"

Felbi happily had the elves draw their sword and shield, then he had the elves form two lines as they worked with the rear platoon fight the humans.

"Go to hell, human!"

"Get lost, fake human!"

The humans of the northern army and the elves cursed each other as they fought. The humans fought fiercely, but the elves were inferior neither in morale nor equipment.

As the battle grew fierce, Gi Ji Arsil came back from the front. He had led his platoon of assassins through the gaps between the other platoons to return.

"Don't let the humans near the king!"

The battle at the back was a mess. The humans took the goblins by surprise, but Gi Ji Arsil was able to sense that the king was in danger, so he brought his platoon back. He jumped with his men in between the elves and the humans to pierce the humans' throats.

Due to that, however, the bleeding of the length and width formation that the king had set up did not stop. Gi Za's support alone was not enough to stop it.

The battle of the elves, goblins, and humans spread with the Goblin King and Gulland fighting at the center.

While the Goblin King crossed swords with Gulland, the goblins that were taken aback from the humans' sudden attack finally started to recover themselves.

But it was then that Sivara led his assault team and joined the already chaotic battle.

"Found him! Kill that goblin!"

Sivara raised his halberd toward the Goblin King, who was locked in a duel with Gulland.

The Goblin King's figure as he swung Zweihander and gradually pushed back the holy knight was truly deserving of the title, Enemy of Humanity.

"Nu!?"

At the last moment, a chill crawled up the Goblin King's neck, forcing him to twist his body.

As soon as he did, a wind blew past his cheeks and a giant black shadow passed him by.

"You sure are having a hard time, Gulland!"

Gulland clicked his tongue when he saw Sivara enter the fray on his happy lion, then he fixed his grip on his Blue Thunder.

"Tch, I'd say you're in the way, but this isn't the time. Let's do this! This monster's a tough one!"

"Ha ha, a fight with the great hero. It's an honor!"

Sivara and Gulland stood before the Goblin King, while the cavalry ran straight for him from behind.

Suddenly, the Goblin King turned his back on the two holy knights and faced the oncoming cavalry. He thrust Zweihander into the ground as he pulled out

Flamberge.

“Enchant!”

He used Third Chant with Flowing Magic Control and gathered the ether within his body onto his great sword.

“Don’t let him run!”

“Not good, he’s up to something!”

“Leave it to us, Lord Sivara!”

The Goblin King listened to the two holy knights behind him while he swung his great sword from his shoulder. The approaching cavalry was close enough for him to see their faces.

As he stepped in, he used the strength of his whole body.

As he bellowed out a howl toward Sivara’s assault team, he released the gathered ether.

“GURUuuuAAAAaa!!”

A slash formed from that colossal black flame shot forth through the air, and in an instant, the cavalry in front of him was split in two. The cavalry following from behind that were caught up in the attack were furious.

“Shit!”

When Sivara saw the resulting disaster from that one attack, he couldn’t help but cuss out with shaking voice.

He watched as the Goblin King continued to move.

As the Goblin King brought Flamberge back to its hilt, he pulled Zweihander out of the ground and scooped up from below with it at the approaching cavalry.

Then with one blow each, the Goblin King tore one cavalry after another, splitting both horse and rider in half.

“Dodge him and run past him!! Kill the other goblins instead!” Sivara screamed while Gulland clicked his tongue. “Enough! You will harm my soldiers no more!”

Sivara rode with his happy lion and attacked the Goblin King.

The sharpness of his halberd as he swung it from atop his mount was comparable to that of Gulland's attacks, but the Goblin King's great sword was as long as a human's spear.

The Goblin King clearly had the upper hand in physical strength. He managed to pushed back Sivara, but then Gulland jumped in the moment he saw an opening.

Facing the fierce attacks of the two holy knights alone, even the Goblin King had no choice but to take a step back.

"Thanks, Gulland..."

"Let's do it together, alright!?"

As Sivara regained his calm upon hearing Gulland's voice, he nodded

The initiative now belonged to the two holy knights.

Gulland stepped in and swung his great sword, and the Goblin King met his blade, but this time, Sivara was also present.

Sivara swung his halberd and aimed for the Goblin King's neck. If that attack of his hit, he would undoubtedly take the king's head.

The Goblin King had no choice but to retreat.

"Astaroth!"

"Ku... Enchant!"

The moment the king retreated, Gulland cast his lightning spell toward the king.

The Goblin King's black flames canceled his attack out, but behind the clouds of dust that had been stirred was Sivara rushing in with his halberd.

The Goblin King dodged his attack by a hair's breadth and parried the tip of his halberd with his great sword, but before the Goblin King could begin his counter attack, Gulland stepped in and came to view.

The Goblin King had no choice but to bring his great sword back to defend.

As the two great swords locked once more, sparks erupted as black flames dancing with lightning scattered into their surroundings.

The Goblin King was clearly being pushed back by the two holy knights.

As they separated, Gulland attacked once more. There wasn't a big difference in strength between Gulland and the king when it came to a fight with swords.

As the king crossed swords with Gulland both near and far, Sivara came and swung his halberd. That heavy and sharp attack sent by Sivara from atop his steed was truly like that of the death god's scythe.

If the Goblin King were to receive that attack poorly, he would surely leave an opening.

Somehow, the Goblin King managed to send a proper reply, but the happy lion dodged his reply and it was able to protect its master.

Sivara, who was able to tame this happy lion, was indeed deserving of praise. After all, his combination with his steed was able to drive the king this far.

The two holy knights saw a ray of hope.

But just when they thought they could finally stand against the Goblin King, another change occurred on the battlefield.

"Lord Sivara, there's a cloud of dust moving from the west!"

The cavalry were caught in their own battles, but one of them came back to inform Sivara. For a moment, everyone glanced toward the west.

Reflected on the king's vision was the mad lion, Gi Zu Ruo, and the unmistakable new Gi Go Amatsuki.

"To the king! Kill those humans!"

As Gi Zu Ruo swung his spear and cried out, the goblins following from behind cried back and leaped for Sivara's assault team.

When Sivara and Gulland saw that, they glanced at each other.

"...Fuck!!"

"All forces are to move south."

They knew continuing this battle any further was meaningless.

“But before that!”

Gulland raised his great sword toward the heavens.

The Goblin King sensed that a powerful attack was coming, so he took a stepped forward, but Sivara’s halberd stopped him in his tracks.

“Barbatos!”

A storm of blades gathered and formed a whirlpool, then in the next instant, it came flying for the Goblin King.

The Goblin King defended with his great sword, but by time the attack ceased, the two holy knights were already far away.

That was because there were many soldiers between the Goblin King and the two holy knights.

After the goblins’ formation was broken through, the humans kept attacking without giving them a single moment of reprieve. In the end, the archers, the spearmen, and the cavalry were even able to retreat.

The Goblin King glared at the two holy knights as they ran away, wondering what choice he should make. He decided to rescue the majority of the goblins.

“The humans have retreated! Only a few are left! Drive them away!!”

“Your Majesty!”

Gi Zu and Gi Go, who failed to defend the center, appeared before the king.

“Our deepest—”

“You two occupy the western capital!”

Gi Zu wanted to apologize, but the king spoke before he could finish.

“The battle isn’t over just yet! If you want to apologize, do it with an achievement!”

“A-As you will!”

Gi Zu deeply bowed as he replied to the king in an almost shouting voice, then as he rebuked his subordinates, he crushed the remaining humans forces at the

center.

The Goblin King turned his gaze to Gi Go Amatsuki, who was now a duke class.

The aura of the strong now exuded from him.

“Your Majesty...”

But that strong goblin bowed his head like a sinner seeking pardon, kneeling like a man on death row.

“You’ve returned. Well done!”

“I have, Your Majesty...”

Behind Gi Go were the soldiers sent by the yugushiva tribe. They were few in numbers, but they oozed killing intent from their masked faces. They quietly stood there waiting for orders.

“You have gained much, it seems.”

“This is all yours, Your Majesty... At long last, I can finally swing my sword in your name!”

“I shall accept that sword,” the Goblin King said. “I have yet to receive the head of the western feudal lord. Plunder it! On this moment, I hereby free you from your oath to spare!”

Gi Go quietly stood back up.

In his eyes burned a desire to fight unlike any before.

Chapter 169: War at the Western Capital III

With the mad lion, Gi Zu Ruo, participating in the battle outside of the western capital, the goblins were finally able to secure victory.

The goblins tried to pursue the fleeing Storm Knight, Gulland, and Ripper Knight, Sivara, but they were able to fend off the goblins and successfully retreat to the southern region.

The whole battle took about half a day, and it ended in the humans' defeat.

After all, while Sivara and Gulland were still alive, they still failed to achieve the objectives they had laid out. They could not evacuate Gowen, they could not kill the Goblin King despite breaking through his length and width formation, and most of the southern army was lost in the battle.

It was still fine up till the point where Sivara and Gulland worked together, but the last night attack was painful. Not only did they fail to reach the king, but Gulland's army of 100 soldiers have been cut in half. In the end, they had no choice but to flee the western capital, furious.

On the goblins' side, they suffered much losses due to their formation being broken through. There were many casualties among Gi Jii Yubu and Rashka's men. Continuing the war any further would be difficult.

But the ones who suffered the most among the goblins were the wounded ones led by Gi Ga Rax. They lost half of their numbers when they met Sivara's assault team head on, and the survivors were wounded so heavily that it was harder to find a place without wound than with.

Relatively better off were Gi Za Zakuend's druids, the demihumans, the Paradua, who were tasked by the king to pursue the fleeing humans, Gi Zu Ruo, and Gi Go Amatsuki. The last two of which were ordered by the king to secure the western capital.



The crux of Sivara's plan was to evacuate Gowen, but when the person

himself gained consciousness, which was while Sivara was fighting the goblins, he ordered his subordinates to prioritize the evacuation of the citizens instead.

“...What’s the point of saving these old bones of mine!? Are we not the shield of the people? If so, it is the people who should be saved!” Gowen ordered his subordinates with enough anger to shake as he watched the people’s plight from atop the spire.

Thanks to the efforts of the soldiers and the cavalry, half of the western capital’s city was able to escape.

If Gowen had joined the battle at this time, perhaps victory might have swung toward their side instead, but unfortunately, Gowen prioritize his duty as a feudal lord over his duty as a knight.

It was a decision Gowen consciously made after seeing the losing battle. It was because he knew full well how tragic villages ruled by monsters were.

“Lord Gowen, the people seek an audience.”

“Tell them to wait at the square.”

Gowen nodded to the platoon commander, and after donning his armor to hide his wounds, descended down the stairs.

Pain jolted through him every step he took, causing his face to twist a grim expression.

Before long, Gowen arrived at the square, where the restless people waited him.

“Lord Gowen! He’s safe!”

Gowen raised his hand to still the clamoring people, then as he ignored the pain of his wounds, he spoke.

“Citizens of the western capital, the city is lost, you must flee to the main capital!”

Voices that sounded like screams resounded at Gowen’s proclamation, but Gowen stilled the people again as he patiently continued.

“The responsibility of this loss falls entirely on my shoulders. The soldiers have

served well! My army shall see to it that you make it safely to the main capital!”

When the platoon commanders listening heard that, they were shocked.

“We don’t have time! But we absolutely will not give you up to the goblins! You must divide yourselves into groups and begin preparations! Do not worry how you will be living in the capital, I, Gowen Ranid, swear in my name that you will be taken care of!”

The people glanced at each other as Gowen pressed on.

“Now, go! This is the command of your feudal lord!”

Gowen drew his long sword cheated by his waist and struck it into the ground.

Gowen’s imposing figure as he stood with his two hands resting on the buried sword was brimming with majesty.

“Hurry, the feudal lord has spoken! Move!”

At Gowen’s behest, the platoon commanders under his leadership all guided the citizens through the western gate.

“Lord Gowen!”

The defender of the capital city, Yuan, hurried to Gowen’s side.

“Hurry, Yuan. The city will fall soon, you must see to it that the people escape!”

The gaze Gowen looked the people with was gentle.

“But Lord Gowen, if you don’t hurry yourself...”

“I will escape with the last citizens.”

“You can’t! If you do that, you won’t make it in time!”

“Yuan! Fulfill your duty. I will write a letter to the king, you will take it to him and ensure the safety of the people.”

Yuan could faintly guess that Gowen intended to die here in the capital, but he didn’t want to accept it.

His talent was something that Gowen discovered and polished, allowing him

to take the rank of knight despite his background. As far as Yuan was concerned, Gowen was his benefactor. Back at the Forest of Darkness, and now even the colonial city that fell under his command, not once has Yuan managed to pay Gowen back for the kindness he has shown him.

“...The enemy will probably enter through the western gate. I will buy the people some time to escape.”

“Yuan!”

Gowen tried to chase after Yuan, who immediately turned heel after saying his piece, but his legs wouldn't move.

“Age... A frustrating thing indeed.”

Having bled so much, Gowen has already lost half of his strength.

But the responsibility of a feudal lord that he carried on his shoulders spurred him on.

Scraping together the fighting spirit within, he glared toward the west from which the enemy approached.



Gi Zu Ruo led his men and literally crushed the archers of the southern army that stood in their way.

“GU, NU!?”

When Gi Zu saw the stone paved road, the stone-built houses, and the stalls lined up along the street, he couldn't help but falter a little.

“Humans could make things like these?”

He looked wide-eyed at his surroundings. He wasn't sure if the people had locked themselves in their houses or not, but either way, there was no one on the street.

This was Gi Zu's first time seeing a human capital. It couldn't be helped if he felt a little intimidated upon seeing one.

“Pops, what we gonna do!?” Zu Vet asked, waking him up from his daze.

Gi Zu fixed his grip on his spear and commanded. “We'll march together! And

kill any opposition met! Move!”

From the goblins’ perspective, the arrangement of the houses was like a maze.

When it came to settlements, Gi Zu only really knew of the goblin villages, and the biggest he knew of was the Fortress of the Abyss.

But the Fortress of the Abyss was big underground, it was not so breathtaking when looked at on ground level. All Gi Zu knew was that it was a nice place to live at.

Right now, however, the king was asking him to occupy this giant city. Gi Zu was at a loss how he should carry out this great task, so much so that he felt like his brain was being squashed.

“Don’t kill the first enemy we come across! We need to know where the boss of this village is first!”

“As expected of pops! So smart! Oi, did ya whoresons catch that!?”

For the mean time, Gi Zu decided to first search the vast roads.

“They’re here, draw your bows!” Yuan had created a barricade in the middle of the road, behind which he stood with his men.

“I found ’em!” Ved said, causing the goblins to all look toward the humans blocking the path.

“Archers!? Unfortunately for you, something like that can’t stop me! Onwards!!”

Gi Zu raised his spear and ran toward the humans. He bellowed out a terrifying howl as he did.

Arrows flew toward Gi Zu.

“Slash!”

But he did not slow down in the slightest, instead he chanted a spell and shot forth as a black light.

“Ohh, having a party!? Count me in!”

A one-eyed fiend laughed as he walked through the road. It was none other

than Rashka of Gaidga.

“It’s Lord Rashka of the Gaidga.”

Gi Zu inhaled after breaking half of the barricade.

“Come on, you whoresons! Get through that blockade!”

Ved said, causing the goblins to jump over the broken barricade and battle the humans behind.

“My subordinates lost in the last battle, but I’m still not satisfied.”

Rashka looked down at Gi Zu, while the latter looked back up at him. The two of them wordlessly glared at each other.

“We have been ordered by the king to take over this village.”

“...Ho, then I guess I’ll have to stand back, won’t I?”

Rashka left the lead to Gi Zu, then he fought with the other goblins.

Yuan gathered his troops to try and stop the goblins, but unfortunately, he failed. Luring the goblins into a narrow path and attacking them there was the most he was able to achieve. He could not stop the goblins in their tracks.

Gradually, the soldiers were driven into a corner even within the very walls of the western capital city itself.

Without enough soldiers to contest the goblins’ overwhelming charge, it was only a matter of time before Yuan and his men would be completely surrounded.

“Commander Yuan!”

Following the direction a subordinate was pointing at, Yuan saw one of the platoon commanders tasked with evacuating the people.

He came to help break Yuan’s platoon from the goblin encirclement.

“Commander Yuan, we have finished evacuating the people. We will be retreating as well. These are Lord Gowen’s orders!”

At long last, a ray of hope had appeared within the desperate war.

“What of Lord Gowen!?”

“He will be retreating after us! If you care about his excellency’s wellbeing, hurry!”

“Tch... Signal the retreat! We’ll go through the eastern gate and escort the people!”

As yuan gave the order, he approached the platoon commander.

“Where is Lord Gowen!?”

“...In the eastern spire.”

“I will go there. There are soldiers under Lord Gowen, right?”

“Supposedly... Wait, what are you planning to do with your men!?”

“I will leave them to you!”

After leaving his subordinates to the platoon commander, Yuan ran to where Gowen was.

“Tch!”

The goblins were already starting to climb the eastern spire.

Yuan grit his teeth, drew his sword, and used a path the goblins did not know of to climb to the highest floor, then he slammed the door open.

“Lord Gowen!”

Seeing Gowen looking across the western capital, Yuan heaved a sigh of relief. But where were the soldiers that were supposed to be defending Gowen?

“Yuan? It’s good that you’re safe.”

“...The city has fallen because of my incompetence. The people have been evacuated already, please leave with us, my lord!” Yuan said the piece he’d thought ahead of time as he ran to Gowen and knelt.

“I can see the whole western capital from here. Look, this is the city I built.”

Gowen narrowed his eyes as his lips twisted.

“...Lord Gowen, please!”

The footsteps of the goblins were almost upon them. There’s no more time, Yuan told Gowen, causing him to finally turn.

“Yuan, I order you as the lord of the western capital, lead the people to safety. See to it no matter what.”

“Lord Gowen?”

“...I can't watch this city fall, Yuan. The pride I've fostered up till now won't allow it.”

A strong will to fight rose up from within Gowen as he smiled fiercely.

“Then please allow me to accompany you!”

“No. I order you again, Yuan. Go to the main capital!”



“GURUuuAA!”

As the door was kicked open, a goblin entered.

A faint wrinkle appeared on Gowen's forehead as he drew his long sword and painted the ground with goblin blood.

“...There's no time. Hurry, Yuan,” Gowen said.

“But, my lord!” Yuan said.

“How dare you hurt my subordinates!” Gi Zu said as he appeared on the scene fuming with rage.

The new goblin that appeared before them was clearly not that of the normal class, it was a noble.

Seeing that, Yuan shook in fear.

“GURUuuuOAAA!”

Gi Zu wielded his spear and leaped toward Gowen.

Gi Zu had lowered his body to try and pierce through Gowen from below, but right when he was only a step away from Gowen, he suddenly felt a chill crawl up his back, causing him to reflexively throw his spear and force himself to jump away.

Two strokes.

Gowen's sword was so fast that all Gi Zu could do was read its trajectory.

The sword that had come swinging from the left deflected Gi Zu's spear, then it drew a perfect trajectory for where Gu Zu's neck would've been had he not jumped back.

If it weren't for that split-second decision of Gi Zu's, he would already be dead.

At that, Gi Zu understood that this enemy was stronger than any he'd fought before.

"Hmph."

"Hey, hey! If you're having a hard time, then switch with me."

The giant goblin that appeared behind Gi Zu was none other than Rashka.

Seeing two goblins come into sight, Yuan drew his sword.

"Tch... Lord Gowen!"

Gowen frowned faintly as he felt the pain coming from underneath his armor.

He was in pain, but he could still take 10 more goblins on if it's something on this level. It was fortunate that the peak of the spire was too small, so Gowen did not have to fear being surrounded.

As long as it was one on one, Gowen was confident he could dye the ground in goblin blood.

Gowen smiled fiercely as he considered fighting to his last atop a mountain of goblin corpses.

"Goblins, I am the western feudal lord of this western region, Gowen Ranid!"

When the words 'western feudal lord' were spoken, Rashka's smile as he quietly watched Gi Zu's battle suddenly changed.

That smile of his was no longer that of someone amused, but the smile of a predator eyeing its prey.

At this moment, Rashka had truly turned into a one-eyed fiend.

"Come to think of it... That time... You..." Rashka caressed his chin as he reminisced, then he lightly hit his club on his shoulder.

“I remember! You’re that bastard who stole our territory and took away the king’s treasure!”

Gi Zu released his spear and bellowed out a howl so full of rage that it caused one’s hair to stand on end.

“If you want this head of mine, then put your life on the line and see if you can take it!”

Gowen wielded his long sword in a lowered stance, emanating a pressure like that of a king.

“You don’t need to tell me!”

The Mad Lion skill raised Gi Zu’s physical abilities and suppressed his fear with rage, allowing him to step out.

Gi Zu slammed a fist onto the ground, giving rise to broken fragments into the air, then he swung his fist a second time, and sent the broken fragments Gowen’s way.

“Tch.”

Gowen clicked his tongue as he deflected the fragments.

The moment Gowen raised his sword, Gi Zu bolted off like thunder.

That was the fastest step Gi Zu could make.

Gi Zu’s strength under the influence of Mad Lion was not something he could compare to when wielding his spear. Right now, a single fist from Gi Zu was enough to crush any normal soldier.

But of course, Gowen was able to see through Gi Zu’s fist, and he swung his sword in response.

Gowen’s sword passed by Gi Zu’s fist, grazing him by the sides as Gowen dodged his attack.

Shallow as the wound might have been, with Gowen attacking at the same moment Gi Zu swung his fist, blood still spurted out.

Gi Zu and Gowen continued to exchange blows, but each and every time, Gowen would aim for Gi Zu’s opening just like he did the first time.

Eventually, Gi Zu finally reached the end of his patience and he took a wide step.

The moment he did, Gowen stepped in.

“GU!?”

Gi Zu did not expect Gowen to step in, causing him to delay in his response.

At that, Gowen was able to send a powerful attack toward Gi Zu’s legs, allowing him to break the goblin’s posture.

As Gi Zu fell, Gowen released a powerful kick to the goblin’s chest, sending him flying into a wall.

Gi Zu, who was now coughing violently, was wide open, but Gowen did not pursue him.

“Since you’re the lord of these lands, your head should be the greatest trophy in this war.”

Rashka wielded his club over his shoulders as he quietly walked, then he stood before Gowen.

“...”

As Gowen quietly took stance, Rashka smiled fiercely and clad his club in black light.

“Enchant.”

Their clash lasted only for a moment.

They approached each other and released an attack that brimmed with their body’s whole strength.

Rashka slammed his club from above, while Gowen released his blade from below.

But Gowen’s intention was to parry Rashka’s attack, so he allowed his sword to meet Rashka’s club.

“Don’t look down on me, human!”

That club clad in black light suddenly became stronger, but Gowen was still

able to meet it head on.

“What!?”

Rashka was shocked.

The moment his club touched Gowen’s long sword, his black light was erased, and his club became a normal club.

With the trajectory of Rashka’s club diverted, it slammed into the ground and crushed it.

In order to dodge Gowen’s obvious next move, Rashka abandoned his weapon and jumped back.

“Nuu!?”

But Gowen wasn’t about to just watch him go.

As Rashka jumped back, Gowen changed the trajectory of his sword.

The descending sword suddenly shifted back into a lowered position and thrust out toward Rashka.

In his panic, Rashka reflexively moved his hand to protect his face, causing the sword to bury deep into his palm, but the sword did not slow down in the slightest as it sought to go all the way until he was dead.

“What the!”

Rashka was a man of valor even among the goblins. He ignored the pain of having his hand penetrated as he sought to take Gowen’s sword away.

Sensing what he was about to do, Gowen quickly stopped his attack and pulled his sword out.

“Ku.”

It was curious which of the two let out that last voice of anguish.

Gowen wanted to finish Rashka off, but unfortunately, the latter wasn’t someone who could be dealt with by normal means.

“As expected, the human who built this city has a good head indeed.”

Rashka lightly brushed off his hand that just had a hole drilled into it as he

laughed ferociously.

“Don’t just take my battle as you please!”

Gi Zu, who had been sent flying into a wall, stood up and shook his head.

“I could wait until you’ve been defeated, but then it won’t be fun anymore.”

Gowen watched as the two goblins refused to give in to each other. He would come lunging in the moment they showed an opening.

But as he quietly caught his breath, another goblin appeared.

“...Sorry, but this one’s mine.”

Another goblin had appeared from behind the two goblins who wanted Gowen’s head.

On his face was the scar Gowen had once left behind.

The pressure emanating from Gi Go was so great that Gi Zu unconsciously took a step back, and his words were clad with an aura so sharp it seemed it could cut.

The power Gi Go had gained after a long period of wandering could clearly be felt as he took a firm step upon the ground.

On his hand was the curved sword he received from the yugushiva tribe.

On his eyes was reflected Gowen. Rashka and Gi Zu were no longer in his sights.

Gi Go walked through in between the two goblins facing each other, and he stood before Gowen.

“Lord of the Western Region, Lord Gowen Ranid! I, Gi Go Amatsuki, challenge you to a duel. Now, come!!”

Gowen found himself inclined to respond as he felt the spirit of a swordsman emanate from Gi Go.

Gowen remembered.

Within that regretful memory of his retreat from the Forest of Darkness was a strange goblin who named himself.

As he recalled that one memory, a change appeared on Gowen's expression.

"Iron-Armed Knight, Gowen Ranid—"

Swinging his sword to brush away Rashka's blood, Gowen assumed the lowered stance he specialized in.

This was a kind of respect he had never before given to a monster.

"—Accepts your challenge!"

As the swords of a monster and a human clashed, the curtains upon the last battle in the western capital were finally drawn.

Chapter 170: The Holy Knight, Gowen Ranid

Sparks flashed as Gowen's sword met Gi Go's.

"KU!"

"NU!?"

Both swords deflected off each other, and as if they had both been expecting this result, they immediately took back their swords and attacked once more.

The two warriors fought fiercely as they staked their pride in this duel. Their battle was so fierce that they left no opening for others to interfere as their weapons clashed repeatedly.

When it seemed they were about to lock swords, Gowen jumped back, causing that careful balance of power to break in an instant.

But even as he did, Gi Go did not avert his eyes. That saved his life.

For when Gowen jumped back, he sent a kick toward him, and in that moment when both he and Gi Go were in midair, Gowen's arm flashed with a precision like that of a master craftsman.

Gowen had sent an attack toward Gi Go's neck.

In order to dodge that, Gi Go used the impact from Gowen's earlier kick.

Normally, one would endure when hit. That was even truer when one's foe was none other than the old veteran, Gowen Ranid, himself. This was a battle where averting one's eyes for even an instant meant death, yet Gi Go was actually able to make that crucial decision to jump back with Gowen's kick.

As a result, Gi Go did not suffer much damage.

As soon as Gi Go landed, he mobilized all of his duke-class muscles and closed in on Gowen once more.

Gowen had forcefully sent a kick and struck out with his sword despite his awkward position. That nearly inhuman movement came at a cost, and it left

Gowen with no choice afterwards but to defend. A slight frown could be seen on his face.

When Gowen came into range, Gi Go released the curved sword he wielded by his side.

Gowen broke his posture to turn his upper body toward Gi Go, while Gi Go sought to split Gowen's body in half.

In the next instant, Gowen used his right leg as an axis and spun.

“NU!?”

Though shocked, Gi Go believed this was a fatal error on Gowen's part, so he continued to slash down with his curved sword.

The sound of iron clashing resounded once more as sparks flashed.

A closer look would show that Gowen had managed to parry Gi Go's attack by rotating his body and letting most of the strength behind Gi Go's attack to slide off his blade, effectively changing the course of Gi Go's sword.

With that exchange Gowen had shown that he both possessed a courage that allowed him to brave the dangers of exposing one's back during a duel and the skills to make it work.

If it was a question of pure swordsmanship, that super parry just now would probably rank Gowen in the top 1 or 2 of Germion Kingdom.

“!”

Gi Go retrieved his sword as it was deflected, then he started pushing again.

If one were to calmly analyze the battle, one would see that Gi Go was clearly winning in terms of stamina.

The reason Gowen executed that parry just now was to conserve his strength and to avoid being hurt.

All Gi Go needed to do now was to attack.

But even if he wanted to, Gowen's Martial Barrier Skill wasn't something that would fall so easily.

One step wrong, and Gi Go would very quickly find himself dead.

That possibility dangled before his eyes as if wouldn't let him forget it.

From the start, this duel had been raging on like a man walking on a rope suspended between two valleys, but despite that, Gi Go did not cower, and he valiantly stepped forward.

“GURUuoGOOO!”

As Gi Go bellowed out a powerful battle cry, his body flashed.

Gi Go instantly closed the distance between him and Gowen as he struck out toward Gowen's body.

That sword of his came thrusting with a power sufficient to penetrate all the way through Gowen's armor, but Gowen's sword came swinging from below, giving rise to sparks once more.

Gi Go had already expected this situation, however. Long-range and close-range existed even in a duel between swords.

The more skilled one was the greater his understanding would be in regards to the profoundness of weapon range.

This dangerous battle made Gi Go understand that.

He understood that he couldn't win a long-range battle with this man. Even with the protection of the sword god, even with his heightened physical faculties that a human couldn't compare to, even with his undying zeal for the sword, he would not be able to win against this man's sword.

With incomprehensible feelings weighing down on his heart – perhaps jealousy or envy – Gi Go braved through the danger and forced Gowen into a close-combat battle.

As Gi Go charged with his entire body, Gowen passed him by and struck out with his sword.

Gowen had used his exceptional concentration and insight to see through Gi Go's move. He met Gi Go's thrust with a counter and hit Gi Go at the back of his head.

“GU!”

Gi Go retrieved his sword at the last moment and swung his sword toward Gowen.

The two swords clashed once more, and the two swordsmen distanced themselves from each other.

Gowen caught his breath.

“He really is strong,” Gi Go muttered, then faintly, he frowned. He felt a thin line of heat across his cheeks. He realized he had been cut.

As one who has received the protection of the Sword God, Gi Go was undoubtedly a master swordsman among the goblins.

The stamina he had as a duke class was beyond that of any human’s, and he had with it a strength that allowed him to easily crush any human’s head. He could also leap like no human could ever dream of.

Gowen being able to fight at or above Gi Go’s level was thanks to none other than the sword he had polished all these years.

Gowen neither had the divine protection of the Sword God nor of the other gods.

This was a realm he reached with his efforts alone.

This was the result of a man who polished the strength of a normal human to its limits.

This was the knight known as Gowen Ranid.

His breath was faint.

He had already exchange over 30 decisive blows with the enemy before him, each and every one of which only possible due to his training.

Gowen checked his body’s condition.

He was long past the peak of the human body. Back in his 20s or 30s, he would be able to move without running out of breath, but that was no longer true at his current age.

Like the hinge of a door that had not been maintained for may moons, his joints cried as the years sapped his strength away.

To make things worse, the wound from that Goblin King weakened him even further.

Though wrapped in bandages, his life was undoubtedly flowing out.

His only saving grace was that he could not feel the pain due to his extreme focus. Gowen himself believed that, though he did so with derision.

Be that as it may, Gowen wouldn't dare boast he could beat the goblin before him easily even if he had his youthful body.

He'd already concluded earlier that simply having more stamina wouldn't allow him victory over this swordsman.

Humans age with time.

There was no going against it. It was both the blessing of Jurana, the god of time, and a hateful curse.

With age, came weakness, loss, and yet also, more people to protect.

He had polished his shoddy swordsmanship to perfection, shaving off all the unnecessary movement. Even though he had only one technique to close in on his opponents, even though the sharpness of his sword technique was... No! It was more than that. The way he breathed, the way he walked, everything was something Gowen carefully trained across the years.

His position as a feudal lord, his fief, his fame.

All of that was – at this very moment – crumbling away.

And fitting enough, in the face of death, from whom Gowen could not flee, the holy knight returned to being a mere knight.

Gowen slowly lifted up his sword that he had been holding in a lowered stance all this time, and he wielded it in the middle stance.

He was no longer the feudal lord, who excelled in defense. At this moment, he was the expert martial artist, Gowen Ranid, and for the first time, he was going to fight offensively.

His strength drained, he faintly looked at the person standing before him. A big goblin holding a curved sword by his side.

Normally, he would not be able to see an opening from this goblin. But just a little, an opening the size of a needle could be seen from that intimidating pressure coming from the goblin.

Suddenly, a thrust.

Gowen's right leg stepped out like one trying to stitch together a hole in the air. There was barely any resistance on the power coming from his legs. It passed smoothly from his knees to his hips, then to his back, and finally, his arms, as the strength of his whole body coursed into his thrust.

In that moment, Gowen seemed to vanish from Gi Go's sights.

There was almost no preparatory movements when Gowen moved out. It was so precise and so natural...

Of course, the resulting thrust was all the more terrifying.

All hints of the pain that tortured the old knight vanished from his face as he drew out that one attack and caught Gi Go's life.

But there was yet a thread connected to Gi Go's life, a thread born from the goblin looking into the old knight's eyes.

Gowen's face was emotionless when he drew out that one attack, but in his eyes blazed the will to fight.

As soon as Gi Go saw those flames, the sword god within him cried out in alarm. And without even the moment to ponder how shoddy a move it would be, Gi Go intentionally allowed himself to fall to dodge. Immediately after, a streak of heat ran across the back of his neck.

Gi Go swung his curved sword before he could even feel the pain.

Unfortunately, however, Gowen was not done just yet. In fact, it seemed as if he was only just starting, for he retrieved his sword and quickly struck down Gi Go's sword, then he thrust out again for the center of Gi Go's body.

Gi Go jumped back, but Gowen's thrusts did not stop.

When one attack would end, Gowen would close in on him. Whenever Gi Go was in midair, Gowen would take a step.

Gowen's frightening perception allowed him to perfectly grasp where Gi Go would run to. He was so precise he almost seemed prescient.

Gi Go brushed Gowen's thrust away, but Gowen just brought it back along the same course.

Blood spurted out as it cut Gi Go's arm.



Rashka and Gi Zu Ruo groaned from a corner of the room as they watched Gi Go Amatsuki battle Gowen.

Gi Zu groaned because Gi Go was having a hard time, while Rashka groaned because he couldn't fight.

"Damn it, I wanted to fight!"

Rashka did not bother to hide his displeasure.

"...Is he really human?" Gi Zu inadvertently said upon seeing how different Gowen was from the humans they have faced until now.

Gowen's full power that has finally unleashed itself at the face of death was too great of a threat to the goblins.

"Lord Gi Go might hate us for this, but I think we should interfere..."

When Rashka heard Gi Zu say something so cowardly, he sneered.

"You sound just like those weak humans," he said.

"What!?" Gi Zu flared up.

"Try that and that Gi Go will cut your head off the moment you enter the fray."

Gi Zu was unhappy with Rashka's remark, but with no words to refute his, he could only quietly watch the duel.

Gi Go's body was already dyed in the color of his own blood, but his harsh movements came with a heat that seemed evaporate the blood off his skin.

If Gi Zu knew the word 'heroic', he would surely describe this sight as such.

Gi Go had already braved through several dangers in this duel, but despite

that, he continued to smile. That was the smile of one completely entranced by the sword, a smile born from a zeal that was closer to madness than interest.

Gi Go was a goblin whose sole pursuit was greater heights in the way of the sword, while Gowen was a human who practiced his sword a stupid number of times. The two of them fought each other as if they couldn't wait to be the first to die.

Two warriors, two different races, but they pursued one thing... The culmination of the sword, the apex! A realm none has ever seen nor touched.

Gowen read ahead with his inhuman perception to maximize his advantage, while Gi Go, understanding that goblins wouldn't die from a little scratch, braced himself and stepped forward.

The enemy may cut his flesh, but in exchange, he would cut his bone. Gi Go crossed swords with Gowen with that resolve.

"They're still not done?"

While the two swordsmen were battling, Gi Za Zakuend entered the room. He was the person in charge of leading the druids to pursue the humans.

"I can't believe you can say something like that after seeing how intense their duel is," Rashka said with a sneer, but Gi Za wasn't affected in the slightest.

Gi Za replied with a face void of emotions. "Why aren't you helping him kill him? We could avoid needless casualties if we could just hang his head on the gates. May I remind you that our forces aren't so lax."

"...Interfering would only expose Lord Gi Go to needless risk," Gi Zu said as he kept his emotions in check.

Gi Za sneered. "Then let me tear that man to pieces with my wind."

Gi Za took out his staff, but as soon as he did, Gi Go sensed what he was about to do, and he howled with a fury like that of raging fire.

"This duel is mine! Try and get in my way! I'll cut you down! Just leave this man to me, I will definitely win!"

"But that'll take too long. We may have already occupied the land around the castle, but there are still people resisting. If we could just get that man's head

and hang it, we could take away the little morale the enemy has left.” Gi Za spoke coldly without any emotions.

In contrast, Gi Go’s hands shook in anger as he wielded his curved sword. “... Don’t get in my way.”

Gi Go swung his curved sword and distanced himself from Gowen.

The very air tore as Gi Go swung his sword. From that, it was clear as day that Gi Go had resolved himself.

Now awoke from the intoxication of the sword, Gi Go stepped out to conclude the duel once and for all.



Suddenly, the enemy before him seemed bigger than before. Seeing that, Gowen narrowed his eyes.

“Planning to end it, I see.”

Gowen stood wary with his iron arm in front.

“Yuan!”

“Y-Yes!”

Gowen spoke to Yuan without turning to him. This young soldier had tried to secure a route in hopes of helping him escape.

“Lead the soldiers, protect the people! That is the way of us knights!”

“L-Lord Gowen!?”

“Go!”

Gi Go and Gowen stepped out at the same time. Seeing Gi Go’s large frame as he wielded his curved sword by his side, Gowen resolved himself to sacrifice one arm.

The blood he has lost throughout this duel was already nearing fatal levels. If there were one of those rare healers around, things might go differently, but with the western capital already at its last breath, such convenient things could only be dreamed of.

Because of that Gowen could not run from death.

What should he do then? He asked himself.

That was obvious. A goblin defeated was a goblin less. His predecessors fought with the same mindset, and it was because of that that humanity was able to cut open a path for those left behind.

Like this Gowen resolved himself. He would cut down this goblin, then he would cut down another... And then, he would die.

Gowen understood after fighting this goblin all this time that he possessed a power and a sword different from the others.

A normal sword could not cut through a goblin's thick muscles. Much less when it was a goblin such as this who possessed a sword above his peers.

Because of that Gowen decided to receive his enemy's blade with his iron-arm, then at point-blank range, he would let loose a killing move that could not be dodged.

Knowing that the goblin was about to put an end to the battle, Gowen sought to end it too... in his victory.

Their clash lasted for but an instant.

Gi Go swung his sword from below.

The moment his right arm was taken, Gowen knew he won, but...

Something unexpected happened.

Gi Go's step was deeper than he'd expected, and as Gi Go slashed up from below, he carried with him some fragments from the floor. That small deviation broke Gowen's stance.

"GURUuuGOOOAAAAA!"

If Gowen's last move was a sure-kill thrust, then Gi Go's last move was a sure-kill blow.

Gi Go took Gowen's iron arm as he raised up stone fragments within a cloud of dust.

"NUu, UuoOOOAAAA!"

At this moment, Gowen, who was usually calm, suddenly let loose a passionate battle cry.

He forcefully tried to fix his posture and release that sure-kill thrust of his. Try as Gi Go might to hide himself behind a smokescreen, there was no way Gowen would miss with his unparalleled precision.

His aim was Gi Go’s throat.

Gi Go’s curved sword was moving up at a speed too fast too follow, but it was in that moment, that Gi Go took one more step and brought out his left hand.

Gowen had seen for himself the moment when Gi Go lopped off his right arm, so he thought he’d won, but when his thrust finally landed, it landed in Gi Go’s left arm. At that, his last attack could not reach Gi Go’s life.

The moment he thought he’d failed, a silver light flashed through his eyes.

Silence greeted him.

As a sound resounded, Gowen knew he had fallen to his knees.

Before him was his hateful enemy, a swordsman with a skill comparable to his, the strong warrior who overcame him.

Gowen hoped that the people who would follow after him would be able to surpass this moment.

“Farewell, proud and strong son of man.”

Gi Go’s curved sword flashed a silver light.

It was at that moment that the western feudal lord, one of the seven holy knights of the Germion Kingdom, Gowen Ranid’s, life came to an end.



Gi Go’s level has risen.

97 => 43

Class has changed due to the influence of the sword god.

Duke => Baron.

Name	Gi Go Amatsuki
Race	Goblin
Level	43
Class	Baron; Sword King
Possessed Skills	Sword Mastery S-; Purple Flash; Iron Decapitation; Sword Fiend; Acumen; Sense; Discern; A Master Swordsman's Proof; Silent Nature; Veteran; Man-Slayer
Divine Protection	Sword God
Attributes	None;
Abnormal Status	Sword God's Blessing

Sword Mastery A+ => Sword Mastery S-

—A realm that only the chosen can reach. One’s sword will no longer be damaged.

Sword Fiend

When facing an enemy using a sword, battle abilities are raised. Strength, ether, and agility are all increased.

Man-Slayer

—Pressure toward humans increased. Enemy defense will be reduced.

Chapter 170.5: Character Introduction (Western Capital War Arc) I

TI Note: This will be the only chapter for today. I've been skipping these for a while now, but it seems people still use the cheat sheet, so I've started translating them again.

Goblin Side

Protagonist (King Class)

A human from another world who reincarnated into this world as a goblin. He once lost his mind due to starvation and hunted a monster to satiate it. He is currently revered by the goblins, and has promised to create a kingdom for them as their king. He is under the protection of the Goddess of the Underworld, and after uniting the various races of the forest has invaded the land of the humans, taking the first step in his path to world domination.

Gi Ga Rax (Knight Class)

A spear-wielding goblin who is the first goblin from Gi Village to evolve into a rare class. He is a firm believer of the king and he has sworn fealty to him. He lost his right arm and left leg, but he managed to pick himself back thanks to his indomitable will. He is currently leading other wounded goblins like him to fight for the king. He calls his platoon the imperial guards.'

Gi Gu Verbena (Duke Class)

Former leader of the village that has now become the parent organization of the protagonist's horde. He was a rare class at the time, but he was still subdued by the protagonist's powerful howl, and became his subordinate. He specializes in the long sword, but he can use any close combat weapon. His real specialty lies in fighting with others. He conquered the goblins from the southern region and is now leading a force second only to the king's horde.

Gi Go Amatsuki (Baron Class)

In the face of being killed by the gray wolves or swearing fealty to the protagonist, he chose to swear. His preferred weapon is a curved sword, as it

can cut his prey easily. He has received the divine protection of the Sword God, and once ended up pointing his sword to the king due to his influence. Ashamed of his weakness, he left the village. After a long time of wandering, he returned a new man and killed the Holy Knight, Gowen, who he once lost to.

Gi Za Zakuend (Shaman Class)

A mage goblin who lived in a village situated by the roots of a great tree. He became the protagonist's subordinate after losing to him in a duel. He is a firm believer of the king and has sworn fealty to him. His appearance resembles that of humans. He has received the divine protection of the wind god.

Gi Gi Orudo (Noble Class)

A beast tamer, a goblin who can talk to animals. He came from the same village as Gi Gu, and currently has a triple head as his main beast. His preferred weapon is an axe. He is currently fighting as a part of the detached force responsible for conquering the colonial city.

Gi Ji Arsil (Noble Class)

A goblin who can use the Meld skill, and thus, specializes in reconnaissance. He gets along well with Gi Gi and has fought as a pair with him plenty of times. He used to prefer a long sword, but after specializing in reconnaissance, he has since switched to a dagger. He has learned the Assassinate skill, and is merciless to all who oppose the king.

Gi Zu Ruo (Noble Class)

When he was young, he lost his mind when Gi Ga was deeply wounded during the battle of the orcs. Using the Mad Dog skill, he was able to take down three orcs by himself. He is a powerful goblin, who has received the divine protection of the mad god. At the king's behest, he went to the northwestern part of the Forest of Darkness to increase their forces. After arriving late to the western capital war, he has since been desperate to achieve something.

Gi Zo (Druid Class)

A water mage from Gi Za's village. He was tasked to protect the village by the protagonist. He has received the divine protection of the water god. He is no longer among the living due to Gulland.

Gi Da (Rare Class)

A spearman from Gi Ga's faction. His debut as a warrior was in the battle against the orcs. He possesses the Unreasonably Stubborn skill. He is no longer among the living due to Gulland.

Gi Jii Yubu (Noble Class)

The most brilliant student created by the goblin training, who now leads a regiol. As a commander, he has skills that could be matched with humans, but it seems he's not ready just yet to take a holy knight on.

Gi De (Rare Class)

A subordinate of Gi Gi. He is also a beast tamer. He evolved into a rare class when he was caught up in the battle the orcs. As an obedient subordinate of Gi Gi, the king expects much from him. (He is currently using a triple boar and a wild dog.) He died to the Wand of Destruction, Bellan.

Gi Do Buruga (Shaman Class)

A wind mage. Also from Gi Za's village. He has never stood out because of Gi Za, but he has gradually distinguished himself among the goblins. He has the divine protection of the wind god. He leads the druids alongside Gi Za.

Gi Ba (Noble Class)

A skillful goblin who can use the Fierce Arm skill. He has received Verid's divine protection, and as such, deeply loathes humans. Most of his efforts have been centered against the humans, making him a valuable asset in supporting the frontlines.

Gi Bi (Rare Class)

A water mage. He is expected to be Gi Zo's successor, but he is still a long way away from that goal. He is a part of Gi Za's druid platoon.

Gi Bu (Rare Class)

A beast tamer. Gi Ga works him hard everyday. He is now affiliated with Gi Gi's beast tamer army and is looking after beasts he isn't familiar with.

Gi Be (Rare Class)

A one-armed goblin. He has received Verid's divine protection and deeply loathes humans. He is affiliated with Gi Ga's imperial guards.

Gi Ah (Rare Class)

A goblin who evolved into a rare class during the war with the elves. He

possesses the invasion-class skill, One who Encroaches into the Divine Region.

Gi li (Rare Class)

A goblin who evolved during the war with the elves. He is an explorer and specializes in moving.

Gi Uu (Druid Class)

A goblin who evolved during the war with the elves. He is a water mage.

Old Goblin (Normal)

An old goblin. He isn't very useful in combat. Because he was once enslaved by humans through magic, he is good at talking. He is the parent who riced Gi Za.

Ra Gilmi Fishiga (Noble Class)

One of the four tribes of the west. He is an archer of the Ganra tribe.

He went to the Gi Village as a messenger after receiving permission from the tribe. He invited the protagonist to the four tribes. He has been title the First Archer or Gadieta. He is constantly worried over the relationship between the tribe and the king. He is currently fighting as part of the detached force responsible for the colonial city.

Ra Narsa (Rare Class)

One of the four tribes of the west. He is an archer of the Ganra tribe.

She had been chased from her village by the Gaidga goblins when she met the protagonist. She is the current chief of the tribe and has recently started to distinguish herself. She has remained in the tribe's village, supporting the goblins from the back.

Ru Rou (rare Class)

A young goblin of the Ganra tribe. In the Ganra tribe, the names Ra, Ru, and Re are three most influential. The rest of the goblins have no family name, and are thus, normal goblins. He is currently fighting with Gilmi.

Aluhaliha (Noble Class)

One of the four tribes. He is the chief of the Paradua tribe.

He threw away his pride and worked with the Gaidga to save his people from starvation, but after losing to the protagonist, he and his tribe have since joined him in his quest for world domination. He is the oldest among all the goblins. His black tiger steed is named Jirouou. He is currently retired, but he frequently

patrols the area around the Fortress of the Abyss.

Hal (Noble Class)

Chief of the Paradua tribe.

He used to be a young warrior who worked as Aluhaliha's aide. After inheriting Aluhaliha's position, he has since proven himself a worthy chief capable of standing equal to the human cavalry. He has sworn fealty to the king.

Alashd (Rare Class)

A middle-aged goblin from Paradua.

He works as Aluhaliha's aide and is currently a member of the elders. He is staying at the Paradua village.

Rashka (Lord Class)

The biggest chief among the four tribes.

He is the strongest goblin among the four tribes, but his subordinates haven't been as blessed. He was Narsa's fiancé.

He evolved during the goblin's first invasion.

Dashka (Rare Class)

A young goblin from the Gaidga tribe.

Kuzan (Rare Class)

Chief of the Gordob tribe.

She is a goblin blessed with the divine protection of the goddess of the underworld. She has a skill that allows her to resurrect the dead. She is currently responsible for managing the Fortress of the Abyss. Gi Ga respects her. She studied medicine during her stay in the elven village and has since been working with the other Gordob members to support the goblins from the back as medical practitioners.

Chapter 170.7: Character Introduction (Western Capital War Arc) II

Humans + Gods + Others

Reshia Fel Zeal (18 years-old)

The priestess known as the saint. As the Healing Goddess' follower, she lives to spread the word and teach righteousness. She has the divine protection of the goddess, and can heal others. She has been brought back to the ivory tower.

Lili (22 years-old)

She studied the famous sword style, Zweil Style, in the capital. She has sworn fealty to Reshia. And while she may have lost to the protagonist in one hit, she has proven herself strong enough to easily defeat three normal goblins. She has become much stronger after acquiring the evil sword, Vashinant. She stopped the yugushiva attacks after Gulland entrusted the northern army to her.

Mattis (27 years-old)

The second son of a farmer. He's largely responsible for drying the meat to preserve them. He was sent somewhere in the kingdom.

Chinos (25 years-old)

The third son of a farmer. He plows the fields and is close to Mattis. He was sent somewhere in the kingdom.

Keifel (28 years-old)

An adventurer who took on a request to escort Reshia through the Forest of Darkness. He's strong enough that he could easily wield a steel great sword, but the protagonist still managed to kill him.

Zeon (32 years-old)

A follower of Ativ. He specializes in fire magic. In his battle against the protagonist, he used his fire magic, but still lost. In the end, he tried to blow himself up along with the protagonist, but the protagonist's words agitated him, causing him to lose the opportunity.

Tinra (23 years-old)

A villager. She is one of the women used by the goblins as a breeding machine that the protagonist killed.

Ashtal Do Germion (60 years-old)

The king that rules the western region of the continent in which the Forest of Darkness and the connecting borders are included. He is a powerful ruler with seven holy knights under him. He has recently ordered three of those holy knights to search for the saint. He has laid out new plans after feeling the threat from the Goblin King. He's currently trying to gather mages to strengthen his army.

Gowen Ranid (46 years-old)

The feudal lord that rules over the region next to the Forest of Darkness. As one of the country's strongest powers, he is renowned as the Iron-Armed Knight. He is currently leading his soldiers in a quest to find the saint. He fought hard against the goblin invasion, but was eventually killed by Gi Go Amatsuki.

Gulland Rifenin (32 years-old)

A former adventurer. As one of the country's strongest powers, he is renowned as the Storm Knight. He'd been stationed in the northern mountains, but the king called him back to send him off in a quest for the saint. He became a hero after rescuing the saint. He tried to help Gowen fight the goblin invasion, but he lost. He is currently retreating to the south.

Gene Marlon (24 years-old)

As one of the country's strongest powers, he is renowned as Lightning-Fast Knight. He was previously stationed at the south, but the king called him back to send him on a quest to search for the saint. Killing is his favorite past-time. Whether it's a man, a demihuman or a monster, they're all just pieces of meat to be cut down before him. He was killed by his own slave.

Sivara Bandier (29)

One of the country's most powerful warriors, a holy knight known as the Ripper Knight. He is a martial artist and comes from a noble family. He is popular among young soldiers, and is considered the enemy of all fathers and boyfriends. He is also known as the Marriage Destroyer. His skill at leading the cavalry is one of the best in the country.

Jize Yuuenti (40)

One of the country's most powerful warriors, a holy knight known as the Sharp-Eyed Knight. He is currently dealing with the Kushain believers coming from the south. He was originally a traveler from the east that was coaxed by Ashtal with a huge paycheck.

Yuan (26)

A young commander under Gowen. He seems to be under the protection of some god, but...

Corseo (52)

A veteran martial artist who acts as Gowen's aide. He used to lead the cavalry, but then the Goblin King turned him into a corpse.

Herculean Wyatt (41 years-old)

A member of the Blood Oath of the Flying Swallow. He specializes in handling great shields. He has a gentle personality, but beware for his anger isn't one to be taken lightly. After returning from the forest, he has since been working in the Holy Shushunu Kingdom as the leader of the blood oath of the flying swallows.

Mage Killer Mill (20 years-old)

A member of the Blood Oath of the Flying Swallow. She is an assassin that favors the use of talons. Renowned as the mage killer, she is a mage's worst nightmare. After returning from the forest, she has since been helping out in the slums and watching over orphans. She met Reshia and successfully managed to give her the orphans' present.

Wand of Destruction Bellan (37 years-old)

A member of the Blood Oath of the Flying Swallow. He wields a fire staff. As a former knight, he cares a great deal about honor. He died while protecting his allies.

Hawk-Eyed Fick (32 years-old)

An adventurer with two names. He has exceptional perception and skill. He is currently searching through the Forest of Darkness under Gulland's lead. After returning from the forest, he has since gone to the southern free cities on a solo adventure.

The White Hand of Life (Age Unknown)

A priest robed in white. She specializes in healing and support. Her age, name, and origin are all unknown. After converting Vitz and Yugil, she has started traveling the world to find more adherents.

Vitz (28 years-old)

A talkative sword-wielding adventurer. He's actual strength isn't bad, but he's still far from being deserving of a second name. He was caught by the White Hand of Life and is currently traveling the world with her.

Yugil (26 years-old)

An adventurer and an unwilling shield bearer. He might appear old, but he is actually still young. He was caught by the White Hand of Life and is currently traveling the world with her.

Yoshu (27 years-old)

The younger brother of the slaves Gene purchased. The collar of obedience around his neck keeps him from going against Gene's orders. Healers are rare, so he's been made into a shield bearer. He ended up on the goblin side because of his older sister's whims. He is currently traveling with Gi Go.

Shumea (29 years-old)

The older sister of the slaves Gene purchased. The collar of obedience around her neck keeps her from going against Gene's orders. Contrast to her brother who bears a shield, she uses a spear. She is a gutsy woman who believes being with the Goblin King is better than living within human society. She is currently negotiating with humans.

Household of the Gods

The goddess.

The Goddess of the Underworld and the Goddess of Valor. As the goddess the snakes serve, she has given her blessing to the protagonist. She is a dangerous woman with her deep jealousy and fierce temperament.

Zenobia

The Goddess of Healing. She has given her blessing to Reshia. She has also warned the protagonist to protect her. The goddess might hate her, but she doesn't feel the same way toward The goddess.

Pitch Black (Verid)

A one-eyed red-eyed snake that belongs to the Goddess of the Underworld.

Twin-Headed Snake

Known to the goblins as the Lord of Decay. He is one of the snakes that fought the world with the Goddess of the Underworld.

Others

Selena

The elven woman Gene purchased. She became a slave after running away from her tribe. She was freed after she killed Gene. Since then hse has been under the care of the Goblin King with Shumea.

Hasu

A high kobold. She is one of the protagonist's pets.

The protagonist managed to tame her by giving her orc corps and other meat as bait.

She is a fortuitous kobold who somehow managed to become the leader of her pack. She is currently leeching off the orcs. She wants to eat the orc children, but unfortunately, she just can't find an opening. She attacked the colonial city with the orcs, but the humans weren't very tasty.

Cynthia

As the pup of the gray wolves, she has been given the elven name that means lady of the lake. Reshia, Lili, and other children and women are quite taken by her lovely fur. She has grown up enough to lead her household. She has grown up to become a spectacular gray wolf even better than her own parents.

Gastra

As the pup of the gray wolves, he has been given the name of a wise human monarch that means sovereign of the wind's howls. His uninhibited personality leads him to battle Hasu for ranks on a daily basis. He is became the leader of many beasts in the capital, then in the ivory tower. His subordinates are mostly females.

Bui

A timid orc. Gol Gol had taken a liking for him despite his small body. After Gol Gol died, he led the orcs to the west, but the protagonist managed to capture

them. He attacked the colonial city with Gilmi. Recently, his greatest worry is that he'll suddenly find himself fighting at the frontlines with the humans.

Gol Gol

The orc king that attacked the village. He is a berserker who can use skills. He was defeated by the protagonist.

Demihumans

Nikea

Chief of the araneae, a female chief. She speaks firmly and possesses a proud mindset. The lower half of her body is a spider, but the upper half is that of a lovely maiden. She covers her upper body with clothes made from araneae thread. Poison drips from her talons, and she can use them alongside her threads. That fighting style has earned her the name Poison Feather. She is a descendant of the red crystal.

Nerou

An influential person of the araneae. He opposed Nikea's plans to accept the goblin and ended up dead for it. He is a descendant of the blue crystal.

Fanfan

The female chief of the mud-scaled tribe. She is slow in a good way. As a member of a tribe known for moving underground, she works as a merchant just like Yushika. She knows more than the harpies and is also a better messenger. She looks like a mole on the outside, but her vision is perfectly fine. Her pair of round eyes is her unique feature. She is known as the hardest claw. Shi is a descendant of the dark crystal.

Yushika.

Female chief of the harpies. She has a huge bag hanging from her neck that she carries with her arms. She uses it to store her cargo. She is a merchant. She is also a mischievous woman who doesn't cower even before the king. She has white wings sprouting from her back and bird feet. She is known as the first wing. She is a descendant of the white crystal.

Luther

The old chief of the papirsag/shell tribe. He is of short stature and he carries a moss-covered shell on his back. He is a careful man, whose eyes always seem

sleepy. Despite that his gaze is extremely sharp. His tribe specializes in processing trees and taming monsters. He is a descendant of the hard crystal.

Tanita

Chief of the long-tailed, a subspecies of the lizardman with two heads and two tails. Half of his body is covered with a shell, but the other half has his skin exposed just like an amphibian. He is a descendant of the soft crystal.

Kerodotos

Chief of the minotaurs. He talks slowly. He tried to crush the goblins as soon as he saw one. There is almost nothing good about him when it comes to talking. His gaze is sharp and while he might talk foolishly, he is by no means incompetent. He is a descendant of the heavy crystal.

Mido

Chief of the werewolves. He is a friend of the gray wolves and he lives in the fields. He is known as the tyrant because he likes to tear his enemy apart with brute force. He is a firm believer of power and originally disliked the goblins. He is extremely friendly toward the gray wolves. He tends to be impulsive, but he's definitely not one to be underestimated. He is a descendant of the fierce crystal.

Daizos

Chief of the centaurs. He found himself in a bad position ever since Gurfia became a ghost. He tried to kill Gurfia with the elite of his tribe but failed. He hates the goblins. He is a descendant of the proud crystal.

Rukenon

The guide Nikea introduced.

Carad

The slave werewolf from the Jirad Forest.

Elves

Shure Forni

Chief of the Sylph's Forni village. He wishes to reform the elves. He studied under Falun and is Shunaria's father. He is renowned as the Wise Shure. He formed an alliance with the Goblin King and promised him full support in the war with the humans.

Falun Gastair

Chief of the western Gastia Forest. Shure's friend and master. He is considered a scheming strategist even by his own disciple, Shure. He brought back the elven school system and is currently using his village to spread knowledge.

Shunaria Forni

Shure's daughter. She is smart and frequently does pointless things. She delivered the Goblin King's new weapon to him. She is currently working as a civil official in a human village.

Pale Symphoria

A young sylph warrior who gathered experience in the human world. She is a versatile warrior who can lead army and fight her own battles. She managed to make the bigger goblin army retreat many times. She left the Goblin King to help her clan, Elks.

Felbi

One of Symphoria's commanders. He fought alongside Pale against the goblins, but he mostly left the leadership of the platoon to her. He has been grudgingly leading the platoon since Pale left. He dreams of becoming a first-rate warrior.

Fenit Symphoria

Symphoria's chief. He is Pale's cousin. He is self-righteous and proud. He was the only one given a death penalty after the war.

Priena Sinfall

Sinfall's chief. She is a woman but her face is cold. She never managed to take back Sinfall after it was taken from her during the Sylph Unification War. She was exiled after the war.

Nash Jirad

Jirad's chief. He foresaw the human threat lie Shure and the Goblin King, but was rebuked because of his decision to enslave the demihumans. He was stripped of his last name and made a commoner after the war.

Silver Sheng

Sheng's chief. He was sympathetic to Pale from beginning to end, but was coerced by Fenit to hand her over to the goblins. He was stripped of his last name and made to work at the Jirad's hidden farm after the war.

Chapter 171: The Founding of a New Country

Gowen fell as he received Gi Go's attack, then immediately after, Gi Go took his head.

"Lord Gowen!!"

Gi Za Zakuend's wind greeted Yuan when he approached Gowen's corpse. The wind of a shaman wasn't something Yuan could contest, and he found himself blown into a wall.

"GAH!?"

Yuan crashed straight into the wall without being able to mitigate the impact even a little. As he tried to stand up with much difficulty, a cold voice spoke to him.

"Stop it."

Gi Za's wind blew once more.

With Yuan being as emotional as he was now, he was powerless before Gi Za's wind. Fortunately, Gi Go was there to stop the wind with his curved sword.

"...What are you doing?" Gi Za asked with a deep voice. He didn't hide his displeasure even a little.

Gi Go looked Gi Za in the eye as he swung his blade to rid it of Gowen's blood.

"I want to talk to this man."

Gi Za's cold eyes clashed with Gi Go's burning eyes that just came from a duel with one of the holy knights. A heavy atmosphere filled the room, and Gi Zu and Rashka glanced at each other.

"Those two don't get along?" Rashka asked.

"Don't ask me. They're both of a higher class than me. They wouldn't even spare me the time unless necessary."

Gi Zu folded his hands as he watched the two goblins argue, while Rashka

sighed and turned heel.

“Ridiculous! I’m leaving! There might still be a head worth plucking out there!”

Seeing Rashka leave, Gi Za decided to walk away as well.

“Do as you please, but this man’s head must be hanged,” Gi Za said.

At the end of his staff could be seen Gowen’s head with a regretful look on its face.

“! W-Wait!” Yuan shouted.

He chased after Gi Za, but Gi Go blocked his way.

“You’ll only be throwing your life away if you chase him,” Gi Go said.

Yuan pointed his sword at Gi Go, but that only led to him being sent flying into a wall again.

“You killed him!” Yuan said.

“That’s right. I was stronger,” Gi Za replied without a hint of guilt.

“What are you to that man? Did you forget what he told you before he died?” Gi Go asked.

Yuan’s face was covered in tears as it twisted in anger.

When he heard Gi Go’s words, he yelled at him.

“What are you talking about!? What do you want from me!?”

“He might have been my enemy, but I acknowledge him. It would leave a bad aftertaste to simply let the person he entrusted the future to die needlessly.”

Though filled with fury, Gi Go’s words reached Yuan.

“...Damn it! Damn it all!”

Yuan slammed against the wall, frustrated from his lack of strength. The fact that he was being comforted by a goblin made that feeling even worse.

“...I am going to kill you! Mark my words, goblin! I will avenge Lord Gowen with these two hands of mine!”

Yuan glared at Gi Go with eyes full of hate as he swore vengeance, then he approached the escape route he prepared for Gowen.

“Come anytime. I am Gi Go Amatsuki. I will neither run nor hide.”

Yuan glared at Gi Go until the very end when he finally turned heel and ran down the stairs.

“Is that alright? Letting the enemy escape...” Gi Zu timidly asked.

Gi Go shook his head. “He’s only an enemy for now. Besides...”

Gi Go turned to Gowen’s headless corpse and sheathed his curved sword as he knelt.

“An enemy like this deserves respect... Honoring his last wish is the least I could do.”

Gi Zu was worried whether Gi Za and Gi Go might end up arguing again because of this, but Gi Go ignored him and quietly stayed beside Gowen’s corpse.

Before the western capital fell, Yuan led the last humans that resisted to escape.

The goblins Gi Zu had stationed in the area was hot on their tails, but Yuan managed to run away.

Yuan’s bloodcurdling appearance earned him the respect of Gi Zu’s subordinates, who themselves loved to fight.



The western capital has fallen! The western feudal lord has died in battle!

That report reached King Ashtal before the day ended.

“...Gowen died? Impossible...”

At first, King Ashtal did not believe the report, but when it turned out to be true, he was speechless.

Gowen was not only the main pillar of the western region, but also one of the strongest warriors of the Germion Kingdom. The death of a holy knight, who has been acting as his right hand, was a sad and regretful thing to the king. But

more than that was the grave consequences that came with his death.

His neighbors will surely catch wind of the Iron-Arm Knight's death, and they will surely believe that Germion Kingdom's army has weakened. That would make their influence as a power much weaker, making it necessary to watch their borders.

They may have managed to repel the attack of the southern free cities or the Kushain believers, but there was still a possibility of a second attack.

The barbarians to the north will probably become active again too. After all, Gulland reported a defeat when he came to aid Gowen. The forces defending the north would be weaker now.

They had an alliance with the Holy Shushunu Kingdom to the east, but that was only because of Germion Kingdom's power. With their weaker influence, they would have to station more troops to watch their movements.

And then, there's the western region.

The goblins of the Forest of Darkness had successfully conquered the western capital. There was no telling when they would make their move to the main capital of the kingdom.

With their influence weakened, Germion Kingdom was in no position to attack preemptively. Such a move would be foolish on their part, and should they lose a second time, they will never again be able to pick themselves back up.

"Wretched... goblins."

King Ashtal grit his teeth as he cursed the goblin threat.

He now had no choice but to hasten the fortification of the fortress along the path to the western capital.

The western region had been stable for the past 10 years, so the fortress had been left to rot and was now starting to crumble.

They would need to fix it posthaste, but that would take a big workforce to accomplish.

Still, it was better than letting the enemy in without any protection, so King

Ashtal decided to prioritize it anyway.

King Ashtal sent an envoy to the Holy Shushunu Kingdom to seek accommodation for the refugees from the western capital. He also sent envoys to the northern and southern frontlines. King Ashtal needed money to fund all of those, but where would he get it from?

King Ashtal found himself buried in work after the western capital and its feudal lord fell in battle.

News of the western capital and its western feudal lord's fall did not fail to reach even the Kushain believers of the southern free cities even as they sought to conquer the whole region.

But when their upper brass heard that it was goblins who took over the west, they did not feel the same fear that Germion Kingdom felt.

"What Iron-Arm Knight? In the end, he's just an old man way past his prime! The fact that he lost to the likes of goblins proves it!"

"Exactly! And a country that would proclaim such a man a holy knight is beneath us!"

Their opinions were perfectly normal under common sense. After all, goblins were the weakest monsters that lived in the plains and in the forests.

To suggest such monsters would gather under a king, form an army, collude with the demihumans and elves, and invade human territory was just ridiculous.

As a result, the upper brass of the Kushain believers started to lean toward attacking Germion Kingdom a second time.

"We mustn't look down on them. The glory of god is humility, diligence, and sincerity! Right now, we should hide ourselves and increase our strength!"

It was the patriarch, Benem Nemush, who tried to persuade the upper brass of the Kushain believers, who were sometimes logical and sometimes crazy.

Currently, Nemush was thinking of that giant goblin he met in the forest. Until then he had considered monsters as nothing more than filthy things that needed to be exterminated, but that meeting changed his views. It made him realize that not all monsters should be hated.

All the more when Nemush knew just how difficult it is to take a region from Germion Kingdom after clashing with the two holy knights, Jize and Sivara, in the south.

Last time, an overzealous bishop led an army to try and take the southern region, but that failed horribly.

After catching the news regarding the goblins, Nemush started to hope that he might be able to lead the goblins into the south and have them fight their war for them.

“The divine protection of god is with us! He will surely give us the fertile lands of Germion Kingdom!”

Adding that last sentence after his attempt at persuasion finally brought the overzealous believers out of their fervor, while implying something to the logical believers.

As long as he claims their war to be a holy war, those goblins just might help them take Germion Kingdom’s territory. Or perhaps, they might support them with the precious metal of the elves instead.

Nemush’s heart leaped at the possibilities, and he worked even harder.

Nemush’s words may not have resulted in any actual movement from the army, but word of the upper brass’ intentions still reached Germion Kingdom, causing the tense atmosphere in the south to continue.

Until Sivara returns, the only one protecting the southern frontline would be the Sharp-Eyed Knight, Jize, a traveling warrior from the east whom King Ashtal convinced to work for him with a handsome paycheck.

Jize’s fighting style was both resolute and bold, and as a warrior stronger individually than he was as a commander, he was not one to push himself recklessly and try to fight outside the textbook.

Because of that his response to the unrest in the south was also according to procedure. He requested for more reinforcements.

Strangely enough, the southern frontline turned for the worse just as King Ashtal predicted.



The report of the western capital's fall and its feudal lord's death also reached the southern side of the free cities before the day ended.. Unlike the Kushain believers of the northern side, the southern side worshiped the god of the desert, Ashunasan.

Germion Kingdom has been fighting with the southern free cities over its border for a long time now, and there were many from the latter who has seen the Iron-Arm Knight. Compared to the Kushain believers, the upper brass of the southern side took news of Gowen's death much more seriously.

After all, the southern side was situated in the desert and made its living off of trading. The threat of the goblins leaving the Forest of Darkness to attack them was not something they could ignore.

One of the city-states of the southern side, Windsdam's, bar was filled with conversations regarding that very topic.

All sorts of people frequented Windsdam to make ends meet.

And now, muscular adventurers, beautiful brown-skinned elven women (Gnomes), black-haired soldiers from the east, and all sort of adventurers could be seen chatting over liquor.

"The Iron-Arm Knight actually died... Looks like the times are about to change."

"You sound like an old man."

A tall man with bountiful red hair knotted in the back sat on a table as he drank with a young man.

"I'm no longer that brat you saw before, after all. I'm a full-fledged commander now. Seeing someone lead an army as if it were his own arms is no longer enough to shock me."

The aura emanating from him as he emptied that strong liquor without a fragment of timidity suggested he was not at all intoxicated.

He wore clean clothes, but they were not at all expensive. If anything, his well-worn breastplate and boots suggested he was an experienced adventurer.

“People are bound to die anyway,” the young man said. “For all we know he could’ve been taken by surprise. Speaking of which, you should take care too.”

In contrast to the red-haired man, the young man he was speaking to wore a white gown meant to protect him from the scorching rays of the desert sun. He looked like a resident of the desert from the onset, but his white skin argued otherwise. Perhaps, he was a scholar instead.

“GAHAHAHA, I give. Who would’a thought you’d be giving me an earful. But still...”

His muscles seemed to emphasize themselves as he emptied his mug in one breath.

“They got one over me, alright. Not only did they beat me to the chase, they even have elves AND demihumans on top of goblins!”

Seeing the tall-statured man laugh his heart out, the scholarly young man sighed.

Word of the monster army having elves and demihumans other than goblins was yet to reach even the Kushain believers, yet this man was saying such things in a loud voice.

But that was also one of this man’s good points, so the young man let it slide as he thought of the future.

“For the meantime, it doesn’t seem like they’re about to go here anytime soon. And depending on how things go, this might even benefit us.”

“Oh? So you do get it. That’s right, those howls ain’t some sorry proclamation about some rebellion or revolution against the humans, no.”

As the tall-statured man exhaled a breath that stank of liquor, his lips suddenly twisted, and he smiled fiercely like a hungry lion.

“Those’re the howls of the curtain drawing, the signs of turbulent times!”

The man laughed happily, while the young man looked troubled as he pondered.

Monsters ran rampant to the west, while the northern side was a military state, and the free cities, who have been resisting all this time, has suddenly

been divided because of a holy war.

The wounded military state will surely try to prove its strength despite its declining power. They will probably use the holy war as a pretense to pick on the wounded, just like a fisherman trying to fish dead fish.

“Drink up, man. Come on.”

The tall-statured man poured him a mug, but the young man remained deep in thought.

There were enemies everywhere.

But that was also why this was an opportunity.

“—This is the perfect stage for our dream.”

The doors to the bar opened, and mercenaries came pouring in.

“Boss! The princess sent a request asking us to move out!”

“Hmph... I guess it’s time we departed then.”

The giant of a man stood up and wielded his axe, then as if everyone else was waiting on a cue, the people, who had been making merry in the inn, all stood up and took their weapons, then they all followed after the red-haired man.

“Let’s go, ya bastards! It’s time for the Red King to steal a country!”

That day, a civil war broke out in Windsdam, and the Kushain faction was kicked out.

Word of the Clan Union of the Red King’s strength resounded throughout the lands, and the neighboring countries heard it loud and clear.

The Goblin King needed another day to fully conquer the western capital after Gowen Ranid died.

As he waited for the detached force’s arrival, the Goblin King gathered the key players in the war and the people who were left behind.

After Gowen Ranid’s head was hung on the city gates, the people who ran too late had no choice but to stay.

The Goblin King looked down at the crowd of people gathered at the square.

Some screamed upon seeing the Goblin King's great stature, while others glared at him hatefully.

The goblin army surrounded the humans.

"Brethren! Members of the alliance! Our enemy, the feudal lord of this land, has died, and we have survived!"

The pressure and volume behind that voice was so great that some of the humans, who were hearing his voice for the first time, actually fell to the ground.

Contrast to them, the goblins clanged their weapon and cheered, praising the king.

"Let us spare a moment of silence for those who have died!"

The goblins who have been making merry suddenly went quiet and bowed their heads. They waited for the king's next words.

"To the valiant heroes who perished!"

To the valiant heroes who perished!!

The goblins, the demihumans, and the elves all spoke after the king. Each of them thought of their own kin, as they waited for the king's next words.

"Lift your heads, my brethren! The sorrow has passed. Now, we shall cry for glory! For we have triumphed! This glory is the first of many to come! So cry, my brethren! Cry out in the name of victory!"

To our victory!

The commander goblins raised up their weapons, while the other goblins cried out.

To victory!

They raised their weapons up high as if they sought to pierce the heavens, and the rays of the sun reflected upon them.

"Humans," the Goblin King spoke to the humans. "We have invaded you, and now, we stand before you as your rulers. You have lost, and we have won. But hear my words, sons of man, for I promise you peace. So long as you do not

rebel against us, we will not kill you.”

The goblins and the demihumans glanced at each other when they heard the king’s proclamation. They thought the king had gathered the humans to sacrifice them in the name of vengeance, yet all of the sudden, he was saying he would spare them.

Even the humans were shocked. Never did they think that a goblin would utter such words. They looked on at the black goblin with a mix of confusion and fear.

The Goblin King puffed out his chest. “In the name of the king, I hereby proclaim the birth of a new country!”

In the midst of the deafening silence, the Goblin King suddenly proclaimed the founding of a new country.

A country ruled by non-humans was bound to be full of troubles. It didn’t matter how small the territory was. To the humans, such an act was equal to challenging their right, and to challenge them was no different from a declaration of war.

The one who broke the silence was Gi Za Zakuend.

“O king! Our great king! The king who shall guide us!”

Like a dam cut open, the moment Gi Za spoke, the rest of the goblins cried out.

O king! Our great king! The king who shall guide us!

The Goblin King felt the one-eyed snake throb on his right hand. It was as if it was laughing as it throbbed then returned to silence. The warmth the Goblin King felt from his right hand was like that of the spring sun’s rays.

There were some who agreed with the king and some who did not, but regardless, the goblins all cried out feverously as they praised the king. They cried out so desperately that it seemed as if their throats were parched.

The king’s proclamation was a challenge to the humans, but that was exactly what they wanted.

For where the king points is where they shall go, for to them – who had no

gods – the king himself was god.

Gi Za Zakuend was the first to cry out, but now, he was as quiet as a mute as he looked around him with a cold gaze.

There were even some among the humans who could be seen kneeling.

The adherents of the king, the people who hesitated, the humans, the demihumans, the elves... Gi Za looked over them all with a cold gaze.



Level has risen.

92 => 96

After taking a territory from the humans, humans have come under your control. As such, the title ‘Emperor’ shall be added to you.

Because of the new title, Emperor, the skills, The King Who Calls Forth Chaos and Blessing of the Sealed War God, shall be added.

The King Who Calls Forth Chaos

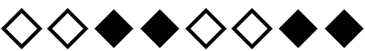
- *Charm effect on other races. (MEDIUM)
- *The effects of the Blessing of the Underworld Goddess shall be amplified.

Blessing of the Sealed War God

- *Defense, physical strength, and ether will all be raised when leading an army.
- *One’s instinct is now more accurate when looking around the battlefield.

Status	
Race	Goblin
Level	96
Class	King; Ruler; Emperor
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One; The King Who Calls Forth Chaos; Blessing of the Sealed War God
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)

Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv68); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake



Intermission: Lost History I

—Once upon a time, during the Age of the Warlords, also known as the Age of the Great War of Supremacy, were many people. In that age, humans, monsters, demihumans, and gods painted the world.

The humans who sought to expand their territories and make grander their hegemony.

The goblins, orcs, and kobolds who sought to overturn the humans’ supremacy from the borders.

The demihumans who were once driven away by the humans.

It was to these creatures that the gods’ expectations were placed, and it was they who welcomed an age of great chaos.

This is an excerpt of some of the documents of that age.

According to a traveling grandma, this is something the Goblin King himself wrote. As for whether that’s actually true or not, who knows?

To begin with, just when did the Goblin King acquire this information? It’s simply too suspicious. If she speaks the truth, then this could be considered a historical discovery.

—Written by the History Scholar, Altoni. ‘A Historical Perspective on the Age of Gods’ Chapter 2, from the scattered and lost secrets.



Goblin and monster evolution tree.

Leader Type Normal => rare => Noble => Duke => Lord => King => ?

Direct Vassal Type Normal => rare => Noble => Knight => Baron => ?

Druid Type Normal => Druid => Shaman => ?

Beast Type Baby => Adult Beast => Wild Beast => ?

Tamed Type Baby => Twin-Heads => Three Heads => ?

Kobold Type Normal => High Kobold => Rook Kobold => ?

Orc Type Normal => Orc Leader => Orc King => ?

Starting with the Goblin King, a person with experience in leading a horde will become a leader type, while a goblin with no experience in leading a horde who was born under the rule of the Goblin King will most likely become a direct vassal. These two types are greatly compatible with each other, such that there are cases when a god's blessing or one's experiences in life causes one to jump from one path to another.

Gi Za is of the druid type. He has no compatibility with the leader type or the vassal type. It could be said that the evolutionary path he follows is unique.

Wild beasts like Cynthia follow the beast type path. That's a different path compared to the one walked by Gi Gi's tamed beasts.

The details are yet unknown. It could have something to do with the personality of the beasts or perhaps their food. Maybe it's the goblin skills themselves having an effect on them. In any case, it's still a mystery.

As for the kobolds, there hasn't been any sighting of evolved forms other than Hasu's, so there's not much info here either.

As for the orcs, it's also a mystery due to Bui keeping things under wraps.

Demihuman Type UNKNOWN

God Type UNKNOWN

They keep the information to themselves, so there's nothing to write.

Human and human-like class system.

Warrior Job Apprentice Warrior => Adept Warrior => Master Warrior =>

UNKNOWN

Magician Job Apprentice Mage => Adept Mage => Master Mage => UNKNOWN

Healer Job Apprentice Mage => Adept Healer => UNKNOWN

Adventurer Job Apprentice Adventurer => Adept Adventurer => Master Adventurer => UNKNOWN

Knight Job Apprentice Knight => Adept Knight => Master Knight => Holy Knight (Preparatory) => Holy Knight

There is much to be learned regarding the humans and the humans-like classes. All the class systems changes job depending on the divine protection received, so the system listed above is really nothing more than an example.

For example, a human following the warrior job will eventually find himself unable to proceed any further unless he receives the divine protection of a god, but after receiving one, the variations are endless. The same could be said for the magician-job and the healer-job.

In the adventurer-job, one can be promoted above the master stage without any divine protection, but the job itself requires the skills to survive in the world, so most adventurers receive a divine protection before reaching the master stage.

The knight job branched out from the warrior job because of the conferring of decorations, and is independent of the warrior job.

Protagonist
93 => 96

Gi Ga Rax
1 => 29

Gi Gi Orudo
40 => 65

Gi Gu Verbena
20 => 59

Gi Go Amatsuki

97 => 43 (Duke => Baron)

Gi Do Buruga

1 => 34

Gi Za Zakuend

82 => 93

Gi Ji Arsil

37 => 65

Gi Zu Ruo

68 => 90

Gi Ba

81 => 3

Gi Bi

1 => 23

Gi Bu

1 => 21

Gi Be

1 => 38

Gi Jii Yubu

27 => 45

Gi Ah

42 => 54

Gi li

38 => 51

Gi Uu

40 => 76

Hal

3 => 40

Mido

5 => 32

Shumea

89 => 90

Yoshu

58 => 74

Hasu

77 => 1 (High Kobold to Rook Kobold)

Cynthia

68 => 87

Bui

82 => 95

Rashka (Duke => Lord)

81 => 1

Ra Gilmi Fishiga

2 => 31

Ra Narsa

78 => 79

Alashd

91 (TI Note: that's how it is in the raws.)

Felbi

75 => 81

Chapter 172: Spring is Faraway

The small northern country of Orphen was known for two things.

One was the Ivory Tower and the other was the living legend of Oron.

Whenever Orphen is mentioned, the first things to come to mind were these.

The small country of Orphen was enclosed in a land of ice and snow, so it was difficult to invade. Because of that interest in it mainly revolved around these two things.

Oron was an adventurer so famed that he has been praised as a living legend. Minstrels could often be heard singing tales of his adventures, the most famous of which was his feat of subjugating a dungeon alone.

As the story goes, wielding one of the few God Class weapons, the Flame King's Eye, Marcosius, he went to a small dungeon by himself and subjugated it.

Because of him even the Holy Shushunu Kingdom can't ignore the small country of Orphen.

As for the Ivory Tower, it was home to all those who pursued knowledge, and was the so-called treasure house of knowledge. As a structure, it is a giant milky-white tower equipped with some divine mechanism that allows it to regulate its temperature.

Many countries send their most brilliant youths to the tower to have them reared into excellent bureaucrats.

This is another reason why the neighboring countries won't lay a hand on the small country.

Business aimed at the overseas students in the small country is also always flourishing regardless of the wars outside.

Also, because the Ivory Tower understands the necessity of peace in the small country for their continued pursuit of knowledge, they often lend their knowledge.

The Ivory Tower is divided into three towers: the white tower, the red tower, and the blue tower. What knowledge and how much can be shared is decided through a meeting between these three towers.

In one sense, it could be said that these towers are the ones making the decisions in the Ivory Tower. And the meeting between them could be attended by the elders – the leader of each tower – and the various faction leaders under them.

That meeting was currently in the midst of a storm because of Reshia's proposal.

Ordinary bureaucrats could also attend the meeting, so when they heard Reshia's proposal to give more rights to human-likes, they were shocked.

"Ridiculous! You want us to give more rights to the likes of demihumans and elves!?"

"I beg to differ. We have long passed the stage where we could prosper with our strength alone. I believe the time has come for us to coexist with other races."

It was a student of the red tower who so vehemently opposed Reshia's proposal such that veins could be seen sticking out on his forehead.

"Coexistence!? Hah, we are currently coexisting with them, are we not?"

"What I mean is not a relationship of master and slave but that of friends."

Contrast the student of the red tower, who was like raging flames in his anger, Reshia was as still as tranquil waters.

"Are you suggesting that we make those savages our equals?"

"By what right do you call them savages? History makes it clear that these people were only tricked, their homes taken, and then themselves driven to the very borders of the world by none other than us 'humans'."

"We rule these lands with the rightful blessing of the gods. Moreover, our so-called 'trickery' extends to nothing more than what war permits. They have no one else to blame for their loss but themselves!"

The other people of the red tower began criticizing Reshia. As they did, the

student from before took that as encouragement and his mouth slipped.

“Hmph, have you began to feel for the monsters after being kidnapped? You’re a disgrace to the title of ‘saint’!”

A faint ripple appeared on that ever emotionless face of Reshia’s as a hint of anger appeared in her eyes, but just when she was about to say something, the sound of bells reached her ears. That was the signal the elder of the white tower, Tanya Fedran, used to indicated she was about to say something.

As an over 70 year-old woman, she was ill-fitted for arguments. But while that may seem to be the case from her appearance, one word from her could destroy a bureaucrat’s career forever.

“I would advise everyone to refrain from such remarks. That is both an insult to the carved seal of the Goddess of Healing and a challenge to the three towers’ authority.”

At that, the gathered people stirred.

The words of the most influential person in the Ivory Tower, Tanya Fedran, caused the student from the Red Tower, who was happily criticizing Reshia, to pale.

“To speak ill of the saint, is to speak ill of the Ivory Tower’s will,” a beautiful young man said as he agreed with the elder of the white tower.

As young as he seemed to be on the onset, he was actually already over 120 years-old. He was the elder of the blue tower, a man rumored to be an ageless magician.

“...Still, I do believe it may be too rash to give more rights to the human-likes,” an old man with deep wrinkles said as he covered for the students from his tower.

He was Serion Harlon, the archbishop of the church of the Ancestor God Who Birthed Nations, Ativ, the greatest god of the many gods.

If the people arguing until now could be said to have been rabid dogs, the people who spoke now were elephants.

As silence filled the room, not a student from any faction willing to open his

mouth, Reshia spoke.

“I beg to differ. If anything we have taken far too long, and at this rate, I fear it may be too late.”

When Reshia said that, the student that had been openly criticizing her before looked at her with blank amazement.

Students from every tower gulped as they watched her.

“Late?” The red elder looked sharply at Reshia.

Everyone else but Reshia herself drew cold sweat.

“If the people who have been driven into a corner were to unite, humanity is sure to receive a crippling counterattack. When that time comes, it will be too late to mend relations, and the prosperity that humanity has built until now will vanish like blown dust as they swallow one nation after another.”

Reshia said that without even the slightest tension.

Being at the center of attention while everyone was as quiet as mutes was sure to have been nerve-racking, but she acted like it was nothing at all.

“Pu, ...Ku ha ha ha! I give, as expected of the saint! You certainly do have guts! There’s no doubting Lord Tanya has taught you indeed!”

The elder of the blue tower finally couldn’t hold it in and he guffawed out loud, causing the white elder to chuckle, while the red elder wryly smiled.

“Hey, kids... Can you face the bigwigs and propose a plan to help the country like this? As future bureaucrats who are meant to help your respective countries, this is the first thing you need to learn!”

The students looked liked they had their souls sucked out of them as they powerlessly nodded to the blue elder’s words.

That advice was meant for the bureaucrat candidates. There wasn’t anyone in the room who didn’t understand what those words meant.

“Saint Reshia Fel Zeal, that is indeed a novel proposal, if I say so myself. Unfortunately, it isn’t so easy to increase the rights of the human-likes,” the blue elder said.

Reshia calmly replied. “But why? Shouldn’t we make a move now while there’s still room for negotiations?”

“Of course, but giving them more rights to avoid bloodshed isn’t something easy for the majority to accept. Surely, you are aware of our history.” The red elder said in place of the blue elder.

Humanity has paid a grave price to stand where they are today, and many of those who stand at the helm of the country have lost an acquaintance in those wars.

The price to gain ‘privilege’ was paid with blood itself, and the price was even higher when the enemy was a fellow human.

Sometimes one would have to face against the king, sometimes the aristocrats... Regardless, it was in a similar way that the Ivory Tower made others acknowledge it.

The price paid is also what gave value to the so-called ‘privilege’.

Because of that there aren’t many people who would agree to just give demihumans their rights.

“That’s... true, but...”

“It is worthy of consideration, yes, but implementing it right away is impossible,” the white elder said.

Reshia nodded. The white elder was both her benefactor and her greatest backer. She had no choice but to back off now that she’s spoken.

“Hmm... Tell me, saint, what is it that you fear so much? What did you see in the west?” The blue elder asked.

Reshia closed her eyes. She believed it was not fear that filled her heart.

Would it be fine to speak of the Goblin King here? Not as a saint, but as Reshia?

Reshia spoke. “...Are the goblins truly depraved creatures? Somehow, I’m not so sure anymore.”

At those words, silenced filled the room once more.

This was not a silence on the level of her earlier suggestion.

After all, this was a question regarding creatures that have been nothing more than enemies until now.

When the elders heard her question, they fell into silence.

If Reshia had asked her question to royalty or knights or adventurers, they would have surely laughed in response.

They would surely say, 'Are you drunk? Of course, they're enemies!'

But the silence of the three elders, who were well learned and full of experience, was grave. That silence filled the meeting room.

The students did not understand either, but they did not have the courage to break the silence. No one was fool enough to say anything.

The silence was finally broken when the blue elder sighed.

"I guess it's true what they say about seeing things when you live long enough... Who would've thought I would hear such words from a less than 20 years-old girl, but... I suppose that's why you're the saint."

The distant gaze of the blue elder was filled with a deep sadness.

"This meeting has gone too long for these old bones of mine. Let us end here," the white elder said with a sigh.

10 days after the Goblin King declared the founding of a new country, word has already spread to the neighboring nations. The people who fled the western capital had spoken wantonly about the subject. After all, the goblin army intentionally allowed them to flee to the main capital.

"Let those who wish to leave leave. In fact, send them off courteously."

At the Goblin King's behest, whenever the patrolling goblins happened upon a human seeking to flee, they would give them food and let them go their way.

This treatment did not apply to those who tried to invade the western capital, however. In their case, they were properly arrested.

During the night, Gi Ji Arsil's assassin squad were the ones in charge of the patrols, while the harpies and the Paradua were in charge during the day.

The monster army led by Gi Gi Orudo moved as a detached force and created a free zone east of the western capital. Its scope was vast, so much so that almost the whole area except for the road leading to the capital was covered.

The beasts under Gi Gi originally lived in the forest; hence, they were much stronger than the beasts living in the plains. The beasts that proved most problematic to the humans had already been hunted, so only the relatively less threatening beasts were left.

Beasts from the forest came pouring out in droves, so the beasts on the plains had no choice but to either be driven away or be eaten. As the ecosystem within the plains was altered, Gi Gi created the free zone and returned his monster army to the wild, allowing them to increase their numbers.

The villages to the west have already mostly come under the rule of the goblins. This was mostly due to Shumea and the elves' efforts as they promised the villagers that they would be able to continue living as they have until now.

In fact, their lives under the goblin rule was actually better than when they were under Gowen. After all, the goblins only demanded a yearly tax of 30% of food produced.

The villages varied in sizes, but because the biggest city, the western capital itself, had fallen, none of them tried to rebel.

The humans left in the western capital numbered approximately 700.

Considering how almost 10,000 lived in the western capital before, it could be seen just how much the goblins were feared and how well Gowen was able to lead his people away.

The only people left were homeless children, old people who could no longer move, and slaves.

"If the children want, they can become warriors. If not, then give them land and have them produce food."

At the king's behest, food was first given to them, then the siblings, Shumea and Yoshu, talked to the children. A person was considered an adult upon reaching 15. Until then, the children would have to do as they were told.

“I didn’t think there would be these many children at this age here,” Shumea grumbled with a wry smile as she took care of the children.

The slaves were taken care of by Yoshu. The Goblin King had suggested to see if they could be used in the war, so Yoshu tried various things out to see what he could do with them.

The Goblin King also decided to hand out rewards to his subordinates. An ‘Eight-Flags’ meeting was held at the plains near the forest, and it was decided that the area around the western capital near the humans would be given to the goblins.

However, the Goblin King forbade touching the humans under his rule, as they were an important resource necessary for the production of food. Human farmers were something that the Goblin King had been wanting for some time now.

The humans that stayed behind could keep their land, while the lands that have been abandoned would be given to the elves and the demihumans.

Looking at it one way, it seemed as if all the dangerous territories were given to the goblins, but whatever complaints may have risen from that were quickly suppressed by the king.

The Goblin King knew more than anyone else just how much blood needed to be shed to grasp his sought-after hegemony. He would much rather rely on the goblins than the few demihumans they had.

At Gi Go’s request, the Goblin King also gave a small territory to Yustia and her Yugushiva who fought with them in the battle. After all, the yugushiva, who were referred to as savages in the north, had always yearned for the warmth that the southern lands had.

Of course, while Gi Go Amatsuki may have suggested it to the king, Yustia still had to thank the Goblin King himself.

“Thank you, King of Goblins,” Yustia said as she offered her sword to him while kneeling.

She swore vassalage to the king with the deepest respect she could give.

After receiving a land with warmth situated in the borders of the forest and the plains, Yustia immediately set off on her way back to the mountains of the snow god.



“Come, Gi Ba!”

The king hadn’t forgotten to give names to those who had evolved.

“Yes, my liege!”

Gi Ba, a goblin who has received the divine protection of the one-eyed black snake, struck his sword into the ground and knelt before the king. The hate his kind felt for the humans could not be healed; so, the king gave them the land situated to the east, the area closest to the humans from that direction.

“I name you, Gi Ba Hagar. Keep a tight leash on your hate until the day to let it loose comes.”

“As the king commands, so shall I obey!”

The Goblin King noticed Gi Ba’s fists curled tightly and shaking, but he didn’t say anything.

The next goblins that appeared before him were those that evolved into a rare class.

The naming ceremony was held with the available noble goblins circled around them.

When Zu Vet, the goblin under Gi Zu Ruo, saw the main force of the Goblin King’s army, he was shocked.

He’d always believed that Gi Zu was exceptionally strong, but as it turns out, Gi Zu was actually just one of many powerful goblins.

He had no choice but to realize just how much of a frog in a well he was.

Gi Zu once told him that he would understand the king’s greatness once he met him. Apparently, he wasn’t exaggerating.

The Goblin King was endowed with a giant stature, out of which emanated the aura of a king, and on his body were various equipment fitting that of an old

hero. When all that was coupled with his valiant image as he wielded his great sword, it was enough to make it feel as if he was something more than just a goblin... something divine.

Seeing the king, Gi Zu actually found it understandable that he would be able to slay an ogre. On top of that, the goblins that served by his side were not normal either.

“Hey, pops... Who is that?” Zu Vet asked.

“Lord Gi Ga Rax, the warrior I respect the most,” Gi Zu said as with much pride.

Gi Ga Rax’s body was covered in scars, but it did not give him the image of a weakling, instead the scars served as medals that honored his valor in battle. He was missing an arm and a leg, but even then, he did not seem weak at all.

Zu Vet did not judge him wrongly. He believed that if he were to fight him, 10 times out of 10, he would surely lose.

“What about that big one?”

“That’s Lord Rashka from the tribes.”

Zu Vet did not mind that Gi Zu replied so curtly, instead he observed the goblin.

He boasted a stature even greater than that of the king’s. He had a long tail that seemed durable, and the tone of his skin was a dark gray that was almost black. He had a lone horn that reached for the heavens and some terrifying fangs could be seen peeking out of his mouth.

His overwhelming muscles made it seem like he could crush anything in this world with brute strength alone, and the way he tapped his shoulder with his club made him look like a demon. He could probably crush anyone given one opening.

When Rashka glared at Zu Vet, he immediately imagined himself being crushed by that club of his and his whole body shook.

That goblin looked no different from an evil demon who would laugh as he smashed someone into hell. Zu Vet couldn’t help but wonder if a mistake had

occurred somewhere and the demon accidentally found himself among goblins.

“Pops, what about that one?”

“That is Lord Gi Go Amatsuki. He is perhaps the most skilled swordsman among the goblins.”

Although the goblins around him all had sharp gazes, Gi Go’s eyes were a league sharper. It was such that they could be described as razor-sharp.

His skin was also gray in tone, but his body was slender for a goblin. Be that as it may, he was not at all weak, for a closer inspection would reveal that his muscles were packed tightly into his smaller frame.

It was almost as if all the unnecessary parts have been shaved away, leaving only a body that was sharp like a sword. The atmosphere around him gave Zu Vet the impression he would be cut if he were to touch him, causing him much fear.

Gi Go seemed to have felt Vet looking at him, as he turned and met his eyes. It happened only for a moment, but Zu Vet felt a chill running up his spine that he would never forget for the rest of his life. For a moment, he thought he would be cut, and he retreated one step.

They were so far from each other that such a thing was clearly impossible, but the difference in strength still made Zu Vet feel that way.

Inadvertently, Zu Vet closed his eyes.

Everything happened for but an instant, but his body wouldn’t stop sweating.

He thought Rashka was a monster, but so was Gi Go.

Gi Go had already turned away from him by the time he opened his eyes again and was looking at the goblin being named.

“Pops... would ya mind if I went back home?”

When Gi Zu saw Vet blanched with fear, he laughed and beat his chest. “Don’t misunderstand, Zu Vet. Not one of these goblins were strong right from the start. Every one of them is where they are today because they fought through death and conquered a powerful adversary.”

As Gi Zu happily said that, he compared himself to the three goblins, excluding the king.

“One day, we’ll catch up to them. One day... Right, Vet?”

“...I’m glad I decided to follow ya, pops. I’ll follow ya for life.”

As Zu Vet laughed with Gi Zu, he watched the naming ceremony continue.

Chapter 173: Broken Wings

To the east of the Eastern Holy Shushunu Kingdom were the small nations, the small nation of Fenis who took care of the elves, the farming country of Guralio, and the Iron Kingdom of Elfara. It was in the eastern part of their territory that the headquarters of Elks Clan was located.

Pale and her two fellow adventurers entered into one of the countless small countries, stopping at a corner somewhere away from the main road.

Pale's legs seemed to tremble as a repulsive odor wafted to her nose.

"Umm, Ms. Pale..."

In the end, the boy and girl she saved at the Holy Shushunu Kingdom ended up coming with her all the way here.

"...Rue, sorry, but can you tell me what you see?" That cold voice of hers was due to her unwillingness to accept the reality that was before her.

The young girl tried to say something, but the tragedy before her kept those words from leaving her throat.

"Umm, but.... Shurei."

She seemed about to cry as she turned her pleading eyes to the boy next to her.

In the end, it was the young boy who spoke of the tragic sight before them.

"It's been burned down. It's horrible."

That was all he could say. The young boy neither knew enough words to describe the scene before him accurately nor did he wish to.

He had not been raised naively enough to believe that the world was a kind place. He knew full well that the world was a cruel place that could take even the small happiness he had if it so wished.

That being said, he was still not sure whether it would be a good idea to tell Pale what was in front of them.

This used to be a lively bar where people made merry and drank themselves drunk, but now, there was nothing left but the remnants of a once great fire.

That nostalgic place Pale and her comrades frequented was now gone.

They probably haven't started rebuilding it yet. After all, the smell of burned structures and humans lingered yet in the air.

But even more appalling than that was the sight of a spear sticking out from the abandoned corpses.

The freshly severed head that were put on display were not just one or two either.

The boy said that the place had been burned down, but that was not an accurate description of the scene, for what had occurred here was surely a massacre.

The boy thanked god that she could not see. He thought it was her good fortune that she could not see something so terrible.

"Why did something like this..."

Could something like this really be allowed in the middle of the city? The boy wondered as he looked at the people nearby.

He noted that they were frightened.

If something so outrageous could be done so openly, then that could mean only one thing: the people who had done this were strong.

"Touri... Ryutanu..."

Pale felt like being depressed, but she forced herself to calm down. She had to think and keep walking even if it was hard.

She did not expect for their base to be burned to the ground even if they had lost to the Red King.

It was true that a battle among clans was done for the sake of having the initiative to take a dungeon, but there was no reason to exterminate each other so thoroughly. After all, something like that would no longer fall under the scope of a mere clan war but a true war.

The Elks Clan was supposedly a small to medium sized clan, but it was still fairly big.

It was hard to believe that that entire clan was actually done in. There had to be some survivors. At least, Pale forced herself to believe that.

The Red King clan had yet to calm down and it was hard to imagine that the Elks clan would lose so one-sidedly; if so, then perhaps they were taken by surprise and were forced to run away.

In any case, she would have to first find the survivors, and then...

“...Shurei, Rue, thank you for accompanying me until now,” Pale said.

“Huh?”

“But, Ms. Pale.”

The boy and the girl were kind people, and they did not believe it would be good to leave Pale alone, but her firm words left them unable to decide whether it would really be a good idea to tell her that.

As they were wondering what to do, Pale turned her back on them and walked away. They had been traveling until now, but unfortunately, they were caught up in something bad.

“From here on out, I will be fighting for the sake of my comrades. This has nothing to do with you.”

That voice that used to be so kind was now as cold as ice as Pale bid them farewell.

While unsure whether to chase after her or not, Pale vanished into the crowd of people walking along the road.



The high-standing officials that was normally present with the king was nowhere to be seen.

In the throne were only two people: King Ashtal and a kneeling holy knight.

“...I hear you lost.”

“Punish me if you must, but please spare my subordinates.”

Gulland bowed his head with much frustration as he clenched his fists down onto the carpet.

“The threat to the west has yet to be expelled. Someone must deal with it.”

“Yes.”

The holy knight, Gowen Ranid, who used to be responsible for the west had already passed. Gene Marlon was actually next in line, but he too has already passed, and even before Gowen, way back in the Forest of Darkness.

Of the holy knights that left to rescue the saint, only Gulland was still alive.

King Ashtal looked at Gulland with sunken eyes.

Gulland had no way to refuse him. This recent defeat was bound to shake whatever achievements he has built until now. After all, there was nothing unusual about a losing general being punished.

“I will definitely expel the western threat.”

“I will be expecting then.”

After being dismissed from the king’s presence, Gulland returned to his room. As soon as he did, he slammed his fist onto the wall.

“Fuck!”

He had been moved from the north to the west. That was the same as giving all the efforts he put into stabilizing the north to Lili.

The Holy Knights of Germion Kingdom were tasked with the duty of leading the army and fortifying one of the cardinal directions. It was a position that was both at the peak of the army and the ruler of a big territory.

They had to gain the territories they were given with the soldiers they had. Because of that they had to pay careful attention over the management of the territory and the soldiers under them. How to acquire soldiers was left to the holy knights’ discretion. Of course, they could borrow from the king, but for the most part, they had to recruit their own.

In Gowen’s case, he turned the young boys from his region into soldiers, while Gulland used his influence as a former adventurer to recruit the skilled

adventurers from the guild, and Sivara brought the soldiers from his region with him.

There were various ways to procure the necessary soldiers, but regardless, they all fought to expand the territory they were given.

That was the military system of Germion Kingdom.

Currently, many among the big aristocrats of the kingdom have come from the holy knights of the last generation.

But there was a catch. If the king found one incompetent or one blundered horribly, the territory he has been given could be changed, causing him to lose everything he has worked for.

Germion Kingdom was the great western kingdom of the continent.

The scope of territories it ruled would not lose out to the Holy Shushunu Kingdom at the center. But the more territories one covered, the bigger the differences would be from region to region.

There was a big difference between the borders and the large cities, for example.

The western region that was troubled with monsters and the northern region that was troubled with barbarians were borders and had less business, while the east that was flourishing with trade with the Holy Shushunu Kingdom and the south that traded with the free cities naturally had more business.

Gulland wouldn't be so vexed if he could get one of the more affluent regions, as that would mean that he would get more taxes and human resource that could be used to develop business and increase income.

But if he were to get another undeveloped territory that would be throwing away all his efforts onto his successor. Especially, now that he has been ordered to move from the north to the west.

The land Gowen had developed was now a den of monsters. Because of that getting the west was the same thing as having to start from zero. Gulland would have to recruit soldiers anew and reclaim the west.

Fortunately, there were elites who fought under Gowen mixed in along with

the refugees coming from the west.

He would have to make a new western army using them.

“I won’t lose to something like this, goblins Just you watch, I’ll kill every single one of you.”

Gulland’s hate for the goblins burned ever fiercer.

The boundary between the Goblin King’s territory and Germion Kingdom’s wasn’t clearly defined, so the area from Sinta Hill, where the fortresses were, was considered to be the border.

There were 8 fortresses protecting the road to the capital. It was a group of small fortresses that were specifically built so that they could support each other.

Its surveillance network wasn’t by any means perfect, however, as it was actually possible to easily get past it by taking a large detour through the north.

After all, it just wasn’t feasible to have soldiers stationed throughout the entire border, so a specific point to focus their forces on was necessary. But it was precisely because of that that two figures were able to enter the goblin territory from Germion Kingdom.

“...Finally managed to get through,” a man laughed as he watched the watch fires of the fortress from the distant forest in the night. His voice was high-pitched for a man, giving his words a frivolous feel to them.

“Can’t let your guard down if you want to live,” the other man said in a low-pitched raspy voice.

The two hooded men casually walked along the forest when they saw some monsters squirming from a distance.

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“This is it, the end of the human border.”

“I don’t like shedding blood needlessly.”

As one man cracked a joke, the other took a peek at the monsters. If they could avoid getting noticed, they could slip past them.

Stifling their breaths, they proceeded cautiously and left the forest.

“The western capital is finally within sight, but isn’t this bad?”

“...”

They arrived at the plains after leaving the forest, but without any tall grass, there was no place to hide.

Because of that they were completely exposed.

“Humans?”

The two humans immediately turned their backs to each other as the goblins surrounded them.

When the blue goblin asked them that question, they took out their weapons.

“Resistance won’t be tolerated,” the goblin said.

Now what? The man with a high-pitched voice quietly asked the other.

“Answer me this first,” the man with a low-pitched voice said. “Is your boss generous enough to talk?”

Gi Ji Arsil ordered his goblins to stop attacking as he observed this pair of invaders once more.

It was nighttime and they were surrounded by so many goblins, and yet they seemed confident enough not to lose.

“You ask if our king is generous? At the very least, he doesn’t have any to spare for you humans.”

The man with a low-pitched voice went quiet at that, while the other man spoke in a panic as he raised his arms.

“Hey, hey! We came here to negotiate!”

“Negotiate?”

Gi Ji was certain of his advantage, so he kept on talking to try and drag out more information from these two.

Gi Ji has had more opportunities to see the enemy humans ever since taking on the role of the vanguard.

His interest in the humans mostly stemmed from getting information from

them, which he was recently informed the king valued.

“That’s right. We came here to talk with your boss, so don’t hurt us, alright?”

“What kind of talk?”

“...That’s for your king to know,” the low-pitched man said.

Gi Ji nodded. “Very well. In that case, we shall tie you up and present you before His Majesty.”

“Wait!”

“Get them!”

Gi Ji ignored the man as he panicked, and he ordered his subordinates to catch them.

As one goblin approached the two trespassers, the low-pitched man spoke.

“Fine, take it,” he said as he handed their weapons without hesitation.

“Woah, woah, take care of those! Those don’t come cheap!”

Like that the two trespassers were brought before the king.



The free cities to the south of Germion Kingdom were currently in the middle of a civil war.

From a religious perspective, the north adhered to the Kushain faith while the south followed the desert god. From a cultural perspective, the north focused on farming while the south focused on trading.

They originally lived two very different lives, but they were forced to unify because of the threat that was Germion Kingdom, which used its might to cull the monsters, drive out the northern barbarians, and conquer several cities from the southern free cities.

Because of that the nations of the free cities formed an alliance, creating the current free cities.

At the center of that alliance were three city-states and 2 kingdoms.

Kingdom Elrain, which focused on both trading and agriculture, due to it being

situated right at the border of the desert and the green lands.

The city-state of Pena which focused on commerce through its oasis.

The mysterious city of Tortoki that was situated in the southern desert.

The city-state of Cultidian, which was the headquarters of the Kushain believers.

The Northern Kingdom of Fatina, which was connected to the borders of Germion Kingdom.

One of the main players of the civil war, the Kushain believers, had Cultidian and Fatina in their hands. Both were big cities that had at least 300,000 people each. And with the surrounding villages included, their numbers could reach a million.

Their army numbered about 200,000, and their patriarch, Benem Nemush, was vigilantly watching the region as he looked for an opening.

On the other side, Kingdom Elrain had grown weaker due to the conflict between the Kushain believers and the desert god's, and was currently in a state of chaos. As for the mysterious city of Tortoki, it had money, but with the adventurers caring mostly about their own conveniences, it did not have the power to muster the south.

The remaining city-state Pena has just lost its old king and appointed a new queen in place.

With the south unable to muster its forces, the Kushain believers were free to attack, and many of the smaller cities were forced to capitulate without fighting.

The defeated city-states were given high taxes and were in a horrible state, but those that rebelled were burned down, so they were even worse off.

When the southern part of the free cities heard the state of things from those who had managed to flee, they were shocked. As a result, they decided to hold a meeting.

No one actually believed that a civil war would seriously break out while Germion Kingdom was baring its fangs on them, but seeing the Kushain

believers serious, the alliance decided to reorganize the alliance so that they may be able to deal with them.

The new alliance was given the name: Ashunasan (Desert God) Alliance.

The Red King clan that managed to exterminate the Kushain believers from Elrain Kingdom joined the alliance to lend a hand to the weakening Elrain Kingdom.

The strength of the Red King Clan was further proven when it was able to deal with the Kushain believers from Kingdom Elrain's neighboring nation, Windsdam.

Gradually, the Red King Clan led by Brandika, became a force in the south that no one could ignore.

"They just kept smoking at us."

"Well, the upper brass are all pretty much the same."

Brandika nodded to the words of the man dressed in desert clothing.

He was a large-statured man with red hair worn knotted in the back, and he was currently drinking with a young man.

He drank strong ale without the slightest hesitation and he came out of it completely unaffected.

The clothes he wore were clean, but they couldn't be said to be expensive.

A glance at his worn-out breast plate and boots showed that he was clearly a veteran adventurer.

The people around him were all mostly from the Red King clan.

"They're not bad people, though."

As Brandika emptied his mug, he thought back to the alliance meeting. It couldn't really be called a meeting, though, because no one wanted to foot the bill for the war. Just remembering it made the bitter ale taste even bitter.

"I have no intention of serving anyone but you," the scholarly pale-skinned young man said resolutely.

"I'm flattered you think so highly of me," Brandika wryly smiled.

The young man closed his eyes and protested. "You overestimate me. I'm also named Carlion Quinn Kirks, you know."

"Well, let's leave it at that... So, Carlion. It's fine to keep going like this, right?"

"Yes, we're sending messengers to the influential people in Elrain, so we should just quietly watch for now. Besides, we've also dispatched the clan from Tortoki to a wonderful place."

"General Kanash of Elrain has given us a favorable reply," a beautiful elf quietly fell from the ceiling to report that, then she immediately excused herself.

"Oh, Cell," Brandika crossed his arms as he looked up at the ceiling, but his gaze was not on the ceiling itself. Perhaps it was on the future he yearned for or the blood-drenched battlefield.

"There was a person that caught my interest back at the meeting."

"The princess of Pena, I take it? I believe she's 19... I can't think of anyone else promising from that meeting other than her."

"The young knights beside her were fairly good too."

The fierce smile on Brandika's lips left a good impression on the gnome, Cell. It was a feeling close to awe.

That princess from the meeting had overseen the meeting calmly as she tried to bring together the various leaders that only cared about their own countries.

But the best part about her was how beautiful she looked from the side with that calm composure of hers.

"...By the way, Carlion."

Brandika's expression suddenly became serious.

"What is it?"

The fact that Carlion fixed his posture showed just how odd Brandika was suddenly acting.

"...Think that princess is the sort to look thin while wearing clothes?"

"...If my eyes aren't lying to me, quite."

“...”

“...Let's believe those eyes then!”

As Brandika's eyes sparkled, the beautiful female gnome warrior kicked him and sent him tumbling over.

The reverence in her gaze was gone and what was left was a disdainful look as if she were looking at trash.

Chapter 174: Leon Heart Clan

Even as the two invaders were brought before the Goblin King, that audacious attitude of theirs did not change. Seeing them act as if they'd forgotten what it meant to be nervous caused Gi Ji to frown.

Gi Ji couldn't figure out who they were, so just to be safe, he sent one of his subordinates to contact Nikea of the Araneae, who was in charge of the western capital's security.

The araneae could easily move through the various districts of the western capital with their eight limbs, so they should already be ready for them.

Gi Ji wore a frown on his face as he brought the perfectly calm invaders before the king.

"My king, these are the invaders who made contact with us," Gi Ji said as he prostrated himself before the king.

For the first time since coming here, the bound invaders behind Gi Ji finally had a change in their emotions. Gi Ji clearly heard them gulp, and though their faces might have been covered by a hood, they were definitely shocked.

"You wish to talk to me?" The king asked as he watched the invaders.

When the invaders felt the pressure emanating from the king, they nodded to each other, took off their hoods, and revealed themselves to the king.

"...Are you two descendants of the crystal?" The king asked.

"It's been a while since I was called that... Excuse me. I am Tauropa, a member of the big fang, and a descendant of the dazzling crystal."

"As for me, I'm just a normal human. Zakusen of the Leon Heart Clan."

Zakusen was outfitted with armor that gave him the impression of being a veteran. He had long gray hair that was slightly wavy. It slovenly hid his face, but it could not hide the sarcastic smile on his lips and his frivolous eyes.

The demihuman, Tauropa, on the other hand, also wore an armor, but his appearance was closer to humans than that of the fangs. Of particular note

were his drooping ears that peeked out of his shortly trimmed hair.

“Hmm... So, what do you want?” The Goblin King asked as he thought to himself to compile the information from Shumea regarding the humans. His gaze never left them even once.

“Well, to make things short, we would like to make a deal with you.”

The man named Zakusen folded his arms and smiled.

“I don’t understand. We are goblins, and you are humans. Why would you support us?” The Goblin King said, making sure to pick out which words to say.

Zakusen raised one of his brows and spoke to Tauropa. “Hey, hey! Do we really hafta explain?”

But Tauropa urged him with a sharp gaze, and Zakusen could only shrug his shoulders as he answered the king.

“Well, ta make things short, thanks ta you, this clan of ours that doesn’t discriminate against elves and demihumans was left out to dry.”

Zakusen glanced at Tauropa for just a moment before looking back to the king and continuing.

“While looking for work, we managed ta hear some smelly rumor about possible work in the western capital. Apparently, a country ruled by non-humans just got made. Well, what cha think, Goblin King? So long as there’s coin, we’re willing to fight yer war for ya.”

“How big is your clan?”

“We have approximately 1000 warriors and 200 mages at yer service. There are other mates too. In total, we number almost 2000.”

The Goblin King nodded. “Give me some time to think it over. Until then, wait at one of our guest rooms. Nikea, please show our guests their room.”

As Nikea bowed and led the two clan members to their room, Gi Za Zakuend watched them with much suspicion.

“Can we trust their words?” He asked the king.

“They’re probably telling the truth, at least, half of it, anyway,” the Goblin

King said.

“Should I kill them then?” Gi Ji Arsil suggested. He felt responsible for having brought them here in the first place, and it seemed as if he couldn’t wait to run after them.

“No, that won’t do... The part about them having lost a home among the humans is probably true. It’s probably not just because of us, but King Ashtal probably did reject them despite needing to take back the west.”

Gi Ji and Gi Za became thoughtful as they quietly listened to the king.

“But what’s noteworthy is that part about us having found a nation. It seems the fleeing humans did a good job of spreading word.”

When the Goblin King smiled fiercely, Gi Za nodded.

“When you first suggested to send the humans away courteously, to be honest, I doubted my ears, but it seems, the plan is going well.”

There was a reason why they went out of their way to send the humans so courteously so as to even send them off with food. In this world, only humans had a country, but there were many other species who wanted to have one as well. The king had sent the humans off courteously to send a message to those people, and as it turns out, that message was properly delivered.

There were many humans who ran in fear after the founding of the country was announced. Naturally, those people would talk about the king as soon as they reached the main capital.

The Goblin King wanted to use the fleeing humans to paint an image of how cruel and fierce he was.

The humans would surely exterminate a terrifying existence, but before that, they would first have to confirm its existence. Because of that they would surely try to find out what kind of person the Goblin King is, and of course, the country he rules.

Originally, the king had intended to use humans he could trust to spread the news, but Gowen had actually managed to properly evacuate the city and the remaining people were also loyal to the western feudal lord, so he was forced

to change his plans.

And just as the king expected, messengers, who also served as scouts, came from the plains.

“Only question now is how trustworthy they are.”

It wouldn't do any good if they found themselves stabbed in the back after paying them.

“So we need to see how trustworthy they are?” Gi Za touched his slender chin and became thoughtful.

“We have time until we give our reply. Gi Ji, have the scouts focus their efforts on the south.”

“As you command!”

Gi Ji bowed to the king, and then ran off.

“...What about the east?”

“Well, it's cleverly defended, so...”

Gi Za's concern was understandable, but according to Gi Ji's intel, it would be difficult to attack with the way things are.

“But compared to the east, the south is peaceful. Is there any need to go out of our way to make more enemies?” Gi Za asked.

The Goblin King nodded. “Right, which is why I want to use this as a test case to see whether they can be trusted or not. Moreover...”

The fiercely smiling king drew a map of the dazzling plains in his mind. The vast lands he needed to conquer were burned into his eyelids.

“We have rested enough. It is about time we showed our might.”

“Now that you mention it...”

As Gi Za nodded, he smiled fearlessly with the king.

The guest room Nikea brought the two clan members to was a house that was previously used for lodging. The two couldn't help but wryly smile, seeing how the whole house was given to them and referred to as a guest room. It just

didn't match with the common sense of humans.

"If there's anything you need, just inform the person outside," Araneae said.

"Thank you, brethren," Tauropa said.

Nikea glanced sharply at Tauropa before turning heel. "...Excuse me."

Seeing how openly vigilant Nikea was, Zakusen wryly smiled. "At least they're easy to understand."

"Can you stop with the frivolous remarks?"

After confirming that there was no one sneaking around them, Tauropa sent a grim look to Zakusen.

"You're really way too serious."

"I think it's about right, though, considering I'm standing before the vice leader of the Leon Heart Clan."

When Tauropa said that, Zakusen brushed up his loose gray hair and tied it behind him, and suddenly, that frivolous attitude he has been taking until now ceased. In place of that frivolous smile was a straight smile like the — character, and a deep wrinkle formed on his forehead. It was the face of a man full of worries.

"I didn't think you would actually use a pseudonym. But I suppose it's only expected of the Lord Commander."

"Couldn't really stand that joking personality, to be honest, but it had to be done."

"So, what do you think of that king?"

"...I'm shocked. Honestly, I didn't think he'd be the real deal," Zakusen said with a wry smile as he shook his head.

What he felt from the king was intelligence and an abnormal power. When a man leads over 2000 humans and demihumans, he's bound to meet various people. Kings and princes from various countries as customers, renowned generals to fight alongside with, famed adventurers, and monsters or adventurers from unknown lands.

But even after everyone and everything he has met and seen, the Goblin King stood out.

“I doubted my ears when I heard he allowed the humans to escape and even gave them food, but...”

That heavy gaze during their audience with the king weighed like a barrel full of lead as it sought to discern their intentions. It was enough to make him think it above even that of the pressure emanated by an ogre.

“I think he even saw through our lies.”

“The part where we were driven away because of them? Is it really that bad?”

Zakusen smiled and replied without hesitation. “Well, maybe for you it’s fine. A few days ago, a letter from the King of Guralio arrived, asking to cancel the contract.”

“That couldn’t be about the 10 year contract, could it?”

“It’s because of the Red King. They gathered the small-and medium-sized clans and went to the south, but it seems they intend to maintain their influence in the east. They wouldn’t want a second Swallow Clan, after all. Everyone’s acting like weak cowards.”

When he saw Tauropa speechless, he continued.

“In other words, we’re not in a position to criticize others. We went to the west in hopes of making a deal with King Ashtal of Germion, but we were immediately refused. Says he can’t trust demihumans.”

“But we’re strong.”

“Right, in a full-blown war, we wouldn’t lose out to the Red King or to the Valkyria, but the leader is still young. He probably doesn’t have the confidence to protect the non-combatants, and he’d be right.”

“Dagger of Webrus... Those cowards.”

Clans needed both combatants and non-combatants to function. The Dagger of Webrus was an infamous clan known not to spare even the non-combatants.

“Did you hear? It seems the Swallow Clan was also done in by them.

Apparently, it's because their leader, Touri, was wounded in the battle for initiative. It seems the Dagger of Webrus used that opening."

"When I heard the vice-leader himself was coming, I thought it was just one of your whims. It seems I was mistaken. My apologies."

Tauropa lowered his head upon realizing that the organization he was affiliated with had been driven this far.

"Like I said, you're too serious."

The wrinkles on Zakusen's forehead softened just a little as he wryly smiled.

"Besides, it's not like it's hopeless. There's that tidbit we got from that farmer, Mattis, too."

As Tauropa nodded, there was a feeling akin to reverence in him as he looked at Zakusen.

"That's enough talk for now. Tauropa, what we should do now is get a good night's rest and recover as much strength as we can."



Because of the sudden influx of people, the public order of Germion Kingdom has quickly turned for the worse.

Out of fear of the goblins, the humans had fled to the main capital with only their clothes, but while the capital may have received them, it did not have enough food to feed them all.

Moreover, with word of the goblin invasion having spread only recently, the influential merchants haven't had the time to prepare ample food to trade.

The public order of Germion Kingdom had worsened, but it was yet to reach critical levels. This was mostly thanks to Yuan and the other soldiers who led the refugees to safety and brought them under the management of the king.

After Gowen passed, Yuan swore to carry on his will, and he gathered the remaining retainers to ensure that the refugees could live.

Moreover, King Ashtal also opened the storehouses in hopes of feeding the refugees. so the situation was – to some extent – suppressed.

King Ashtal wished to attack the goblins even a moment sooner, but unfortunately, he wasn't in a position to do so.

The body of the fire god that hung from the peak of the heavens shone down as if to drive away Gulland.

"Tch..." Gulland clicked his tongue as he watched the refugees with their tents outside the city walls.

Gulland specialized in attacking.

With a swing of his Blue Thunder, he would slay the enemy general with ease, while his soldiers would follow him from behind to clean up the rest.

To someone like that, it was only a given that King Ashtal's order to defend would not be agreeable. Not only was he poor at defending, he also had to reorganize his soldiers. To make things worse, he couldn't even rely on the king due to a lack of resources.

Because of that Gulland would have to use his own wealth, but unfortunately, he did not have enough to immediately rebuild his army. The land he was given was the barren territory of the north. If he wanted fertile lands, he would have to develop it first.

Because of that Gulland invested heavily into the northern lands, from building new roads to adopting favorable policies to peddlers, and even as the northern territory ran red, he would use his own funds to support it.

Unfortunately, all that effort had gone to waste.

Even if he were to sell all of his properties in the north, it would still be insufficient to make an army. Be that as it may, he couldn't forgive the Goblin King. That sensation from being hit by the Goblin King lingered in his arms yet. Even though he was a human, he was forced to turn his back on a goblin and run.

It felt as if everything he's worked for from the time he was an adventurer until he became a holy knight has all been denied.

He had no money, but he wanted an army.

If so, his methods were limited.

One method was to hire the soldiers for cheap, another would be to recruit soldiers without money. Unfortunately, the latter method wasn't possible in the capital. That left the first method.

Many people now roamed the capital without work despite their responsibilities. Gulland would gather those people to form an army and challenge the goblins once more.

There was no other method left.

But such a method didn't leave a good feeling. He has been leading thugs all this time, so he would have to train them first. It was a pain, but it couldn't be helped.

He didn't want to, but his feet moved anyway. His hate for the goblins ran deeper than his hate for training some refugees.

"Ho..."

The patrolling soldiers were surprised to see Gulland enter the refugee district. The remnants of a defeated army were a pitiful bunch. It could be said that everything they had until now had been liquefied. They used to be so haughty, but now, the refugees used them as an outlet for their dissatisfaction. Sometimes, they would end up using force on the refugees.

But Gulland rejoiced when he saw the state of the defeated army.

"Hey, you. You represent these bunch?" Gulland asked a senior soldier who was patrolling.

"Lord Storm Knight," he said.

Many of the soldiers of the western capital knew Gulland by face. After all, they had fought with him last year to rescue the saint.

"Commander Yuan should be in the training grounds."

"You have a training grounds?"

"Yes, let me show you."

As Gulland followed from behind, he couldn't help but open his eyes wide at the state of the defeated soldiers. They were more organized than he'd

thought.

“That guy Yuan. Is he Lord Gowen’s right hand man?” Gulland asked as he thought of that old warrior.

The soldier laughed. “Lord Gowen favors him, but as for being his right-hand man... It just so happens that after Commander Corseo passed away, there was no other candidate left. It’s truly unfortunate. If Commander Corseo were alive, perhaps we wouldn’t have lost so one-sidedly.”

Gulland nodded to the talkative soldier as he became thoughtful.

“But considering he’s managed to keep everything this organized, he must have some skills.”

“Ha ha ha, Commander Yuan would be happy to hear that. It’s just that... With how young he is, everyone just can’t help but want to help him. It’s the same for me. When he looks at me with those honest eyes of his, I just can’t help but recall something I’ve lost a long time ago.”

When Gulland heard that it was a young commander who was responsible for organizing the army to this extent, he was shocked, though he didn’t let it show on his face.

While still shocked, the soldier leading the way called out to him.

“Here we are.”

The soldier pointed to a young male knight. He was young enough that even as he commanded a small platoon with his upper body exposed, there was no doubting he was still a young man.

Despite that, however, the countless scars on his body showed just how much bloodshed he has gone through.

“Commander Yuan! We have a guest!”

“Who!?” Yuan asked in a loud voice as he turned around.

The soldier replied with a laugh. “It’s the holy knight, Lord Gulland!”

The soldiers in the area stirred when they heard what the soldier said, but Yuan looked at Gulland with a stern face as if he couldn’t hear the others.

“You are the one in charge here?” Gulland asked as he glared at Yuan in a condescending manner.

Yuan nodded with a stern expression. “Yes. Did the people of the western capital cause some trouble?”

“Hah?”

Gulland was confused for a moment, but it did not take long before he realized what the man was making that stern expression for, and he wryly smiled.

“Oh, so that’s why. I didn’t come here for that,” Gulland said with a fierce smile.

Seeing that smile, Yuan’s expression became even sterner. “Then why have you come?”

“...Ahh, right.”

Gulland looked around with a curious gaze at the refugees.

“Do you want to take back the western capital?”

The air stirred, and the refugees looked at each other with a look of both anxiety and expectation.

“...I would appreciate it if you did not tease the people of the western capital,” Yuan said.

“Oh, you don’t believe me? Well, fine. I’ll come again at the same time tomorrow,” Gulland turned around and left.

And just as he said he would, he came again at the same time.

But this time, he had with him a bag as big as him and the few remaining thugs left were behind him.

“...What are you planning?” Yuan asked while dressed in an armor and with a sword in his hands.

Gulland looked around him. The area was full of worried people and those frightened with expectation.

“Hmph,” Gulland threw out the contents of the bag he brought, spilling gold

coins onto the ground.

It was a wealth enough to support a commoner's life for seven lifetimes and still have some left over. It was such a wealth that Gulland had so casually thrown.

Everyone was speechless.

Suddenly, Gulland laughed fiercely and struck his great sword into the ground.

"I came here to buy you sorry lot!"

The air stirred and the voices resounded throughout the refugee district.

Their voices were so full of fervor that Yuan and the others widened their eyes in shock. It was as if pillars of fire were bursting out from before them.

"Can you really take this lying down!? The fact that your hometown was taken just like that!?"

Gulland's voice resounded throughout the area and pressured the people of the western capital. Unlike Gowen's dignified aura, Gulland's was a powerful one that didn't bother to hide itself even a little.

"This here is my entire fortune! I'm going to use it to buy all of you sorry bastards' future! If you don't want to be bought, then run! Because I'm taking you with me to the battlefield!"

As that voice caused the heavens to shake, the dying fire within the hearts of the people began to burn once more.

"The way you're going now, the king's pockets will eventually run out, and you will all be left to die! Your children and your grandchildren! None of you will be able to live as humans anymore!"

Though there may have been a promise with Gowen, there was still no doubt that these refugees were taking a toll on the kingdom's treasury. Not too far off, most of these people will eventually be sold as slaves.

"That's why I'm buying you now! I'm giving you an opportunity to cut open a path to your own future!"

Stake your life and cut open a path to tomorrow. Gulland's words resounded

with the hearts of the people. The western capital was originally full of people who wanted to reclaim the borders, so his words were easy to accept.

Yuan endured the fire that sought to rise up in his chest as he asked Gulland.

“What are you planning to do by buying us?”

“Isn’t that obvious?” Gulland asked back.

Then with a voice louder than ever, Gulland howled to the heavens. “We’re taking back the western capital! So follow me!”

As cries of jubilation resounded, Gulland raised up his right arm. Gulland reigned above the people of the western capital like a king.

Chapter 175: Big Movements

The plan to connect the various demihuman territories as proposed by Yushika of the harpies was finished within a year.

Inns were built along the road at fixed distances and were used to store food and weapons, and the goblins took on the duty of patrolling the area around them, making them into facilities that anyone could use.

Because of these trade routes, the power of the goblins could now reach the various demihuman villages, allowing them to fulfill the very purpose the Goblin King allowed their construction in the first place: to serve as a defensive measure against the demihumans that had misgivings with the king in the case of a rebellion.

As a result of these trade routes, the travel time from the nearest headquarters of the goblins, the Fortress of the Abyss, to the araneae village was now just 3 days.

And even the farthest demihuman village, the centaurs', now only takes 7 days from the fortress. That was a speed unthinkable of in the past.

But at the same time, the demihumans also benefited from these trade routes. With them they could receive better medical care and it would now be easier to procure food.

The demihumans were generally a people of hunters, and their prey were the extremely dangerous monster beasts. To be able to hunt one was proof of one's adulthood, but it was also because of that that many of them would find themselves wounded.

Until now the demihumans have been relying on different medical herbs from their villages, but with the resulting expansion of business from the construction of the trade routes, they could now have as much medical herbs as they needed.

Although the Forest of Darkness was vast, there were some herbs that could be gotten only from the scattered demihuman villages. On top of that, they

were also limited by which herbs they knew useful.

But with the appearance of the trade routes, all those problems have been solved, and that's exactly why Yushika suggested their construction in the first place.

The demihumans were hunters. Because of that there was no guarantee to how much food they could procure at a given time. Luck played a big part in their spoils. To solve that, Yushika thought to use the trade routes to distribute the excess food.

The reason Yushika became an excellent merchant and chief was for the sake of the demihuman alliance, but even as she thought to make a profit for all the villages, she couldn't forget her own wallet. Try as she might, it just wasn't possible for her to think of a plan that benefited everyone equally.

Once the various villages have been connected, someone would have to transport the goods. That duty would fall on either the harpies or the mud-scaled tribe. The Goblin King highly valued Yustia's ability as she unknowingly opened such a large market.

The enrichment of the back lands could never chip a crack at the Goblin King's path to world domination.

After the battle at the western capital had come to a pause, the Goblin King asked Yushika to gather at the human city.

Yushika folded her wings as she took her seat. Near her were the elves and the smarter ones among the goblins, the druids.

It was a simple meeting room made only for the purpose of having an audience with the feudal lord. It was in such a room that the king appeared.

The dignified aura about him was the same as ever, and Yushika couldn't help but inwardly falter.

—Good grief, would it be too much to ask him to be a little easier to handle.

Yushika's gaze pointed to none other than the leader of many races, the one who watches over them, as well as the one who continued to make her life a misery.

Her benefactor, Fei of the elves from Forni, was also present. A quick glance around the meeting room showed that the highest rank that could be currently be summoned were all present.

Sensing an ill foreboding, Yushika felt like sighing, but the moment the king spoke, she suddenly found herself with vertigo.

“I wish to implement a tax system.”

It was here that Yushika remembered her conversation with the chief of the mud-scaled tribe, Fanfan.

Fanfan suspects that his highness might actually be an idiot. He has absolutely no idea what the word ‘impossible’ means.

Inwardly, Yushika found herself agreeing with her as she watched the meeting continue.

Even if the Goblin King was an aimless fool, the war with the humans had already begun. It was too late to be calling it quits.

“Hence, I would like you to make one.”

Yushika was dead quiet.

—Did you just throw the problem to us?

She kept herself from saying that out loud as she patiently waited for the meeting to continue.

“I suppose this is in order to rule the humans?” Fei of Forni asked.

As expected, he is someone we can rely on, Yushika inwardly praised.

“Precisely. I would like you to keep it simple and the taxes light.”

But if you want to rule the humans, a heavier tax should be better. Yushika couldn’t understand what the king was thinking as she shook her head.

As a merchant responsible for her whole tribe, even Yushika, who focused mostly on profits, couldn’t completely rid herself of her hate of the humans.

To her kind, this war was something they partook in to reclaim their territory. A reconquista, so to speak. It could also be said to be in preparation of their main goal: to create a country of only demihumans.

As far as her kind were concerned, it didn't matter how many humans died in the process, and they didn't feel even the slightest guilt for it.

Yushika unconsciously frowned.

"It seems there are people who don't agree with me, but the stability of the hinterlands is necessary for our next step. So long as they are willing to accept my rule, I am willing to accept even the humans."

The king was going to accept humans into his country, so he wished for them to come up with a tax system. At least, that's what it felt like he was saying.

When the king said that, a commotion broke out among a considerable number of those present.

Of those causing a commotion, there were even some who were goblins.

"Gi Ba's people are as noisy as ever," Gi Za remarked.

"Displeased, Gi Za?" The Goblin King asked.

Gi Za wryly smiled and shook his head. "The king has spoken. If there is any among us goblins who have a problem, I will deal with them... But if you ask me if I'm displeased, well, yes... I am."

"I don't mind if you exploit them, so long as it doesn't cause problems."

But, of course, many of the people attending nodded. Yushika also agreed inwardly.

"The humans are few. Many of the people in this room could take on 10 humans alone and come out the victor. But what if that number was increased to a hundred? What about a thousand? Few among us could claim confidence in coming out the victor then, no?"

When the king pointed that out, the people in the meeting went quiet.

"Besides, I may intend to rule them, but that doesn't mean I will favor them."

Seeing the Goblin King's smile full of confidence, Yushika wondered if he had a plan of some sort. But even if he did, would it really go well? The humans are a fearful enemy, who would quickly grasp victory given a moment of weakness. If such a thing were to occur, wouldn't everything come to nothing?

That thought weighed heavily upon her.

“...Let’s say I believe the king’s words, a tax system would undoubtedly be necessary to organize a country,” Fei of Forni said after a long period of silence. “But the next question then would be ‘with what should they pay’?”

No boorish remark such as ‘just take whatever they have’ came out in response to that question. Not even the goblins suggested it. That spoke greatly of the quality of the people gathered here today.

“Let’s have them make farms. When the time of harvest comes, we can then take our dues.”

“That won’t be enough. There should be merchants even among the humans. We need to think of a tax for them too,” Yushika blurted out without thinking.

One of her subordinates has on more than one occasion reported to her about sightings of people carrying goods on covered wagons. She knew from what she’s gathered that those were none other than human merchants.

If the only tax were to be on goods produced, such merchants who didn’t produce anything would end up having nothing to pay.

Various opinions came out, but in the end, a conclusion couldn’t be reached.

“We could also try asking the humans,” Gi Za suggested, and the meeting immediately went quiet.

“We are creating a tax system to rule over the humans, and we are going to ask them for their opinion?” One of those participating in the meeting asked.

Gi Za didn’t mind and replied, “the humans can be separated into two classes, those that rule over others and those that are ruled. They have many methods with which they rule their fellow man, methods we could never even dream of.”

Is that so? Yushika tilted her head.

“If the burden is too great, the humans will rebel, so we need to keep the tax light to ensure that they will work for us. Is this what the king intends?” Fei asked the Goblin King.

The Goblin King did not seem dissatisfied as he nodded in response.

After that, the humans, Shumea and Yoshu, were called to seek their opinions regarding the tax system. The meeting livened up once more.

That meeting continued for 3 days, and in the end, it was decided that the farmers would give up 30% of their crops. As for the humans enlisting into the army as battle slaves, their tax will be set to 10%. As for the merchants, they will be obligated to accompany the goblins and demihumans and their taxes will be paid through the food they sell.

Ever since the king made up his mind to move south, the pressure they have been exerting toward the east greatly weakened.

The assassin, Gi Ji Arsil, left only the barest guards and led his platoon south. They would be the advance force, while the main force would soon follow from behind.

Gi Gi Orudo who led the beast army, Gi Zu Ruo who led the brawlers, and the relatively unscathed of the noble class commanders all went south.

Gi Gi Orudo's monster army, in particular, advanced at an amazing speed. He moved toward the south with the rare class, Gi Bu, as his adjutant.

Their goblins numbered few, but they led a staggering number of beasts. Such a number would naturally require an equivalent amount of food to sustain. Gi Gi's answer to that was to take the food from the lands they passed.

In other words, they fed the beasts as they traveled down south. But this was not a good thing to the beasts native to these lands. After all, though a good majority of the beasts in the army were those that were driven away from their homes in the forest, there was still a huge gap in strength between them and those living in the plains.

That was a horde so great it was like a tsunami as it overwhelmed them.

If the beasts were even a little clever, they would surely run. It didn't matter whether it was the human territory that they rarely trespassed or the territory of some other beast. Before that tsunami-like horde, they had no choice but to force their way through.

As Gi Gi rode on the back of his triple head, he looked on at the army following from behind with satisfaction. He was the first one to receive the

king's permission to build a village.

Theirs was a village of beast tamers, made up of the northern goblins Gi Gi had taken back with him and the goblins that were born in the fortress while he was gone that had the aptitude to become beast tamers. Naturally, the resulting army from such a village was also a beast tamer army.

The goblin raid led by Gi Gi caused the monsters living at the northern part of the free cities to go into rampage, and even the docile beasts that normally didn't attack started proactively attacking.

Screams resounded from a small village under the rule of a large city-state.

Though the small village had relatively weak defenses compared to the large cities, they still had weapons of their own. Unfortunately, it was not so easy to deal with the rampaging beasts. All the more so when they came in droves, one wave after another. The situation was such that not even knights and adventurers would be able to easily handle it.

The warriors from the city-state that acted as the feudal lord of the village would normally go expel the beasts, but they were currently busy preparing for the war between the northern and the southern free cities.

The smaller beasts wreaked havoc upon the crops, while the larger beasts destroyed the houses. When the people saw that the feudal lords had no intention of stepping in, their dissatisfaction toward them soared.

From the perspective of the feudal lords, the people rebelling was a scary thing, but making an enemy out of the Kushain believers was even scarier. Fear of the believers has been deeply burned into their hearts after witnessing for themselves the holy war that the patriarch, Benem Nemush, called.

To the believers, killing the feudal lords and all of the people was not a strange thing. Although they may all be Kushain believers, they were not all as fanatic as the patriarch about their faith's teachings.

There were many among those ruling who interpreted the teachings to suit their agendas.

To the feudal lords, these kinds of believers were the scariest.



The two messengers from the Leon Heart Clan had another audience with the king three days later. Tauropa from the Big Fang Tribe and the man who called himself Zakusen.

They looked toward the Goblin King as he sat in his throne.

There was no one else in the room other than he. At the very least, they did not see anyone.

“I’m thinking of taking you up on that deal.”

When the Goblin King said that, the two messengers heaved a sigh of relief.

—Looks like we won’t be dying here just yet.

The Goblin King noticed their quiet exchange, but he didn’t say anything about it. Instead, he said that they needed to work out the details.

“...The details?” Zakusen asked with that frivolous expression of his.

In response, the Goblin King smiled cruelly like that of a cat tormenting a little mouse. “It is necessary, no? How much will you be paid and what roles will you be undertaking... These things need to be decided upon.”

The money was understandable. The Goblin King was a smart one.

But when Tauropa heard the king mention about ‘roles’, he couldn’t help but tilt his head in puzzlement.

Zakusen felt an ill foreboding as cold sweat slid down his back.

“The only thing we can do is fight,” Tauropa said.

“Yes, and I would like you to help with that,” the Goblin King said with that same smile from before.

“...What is it that you wish of us?”

“I want you to destroy the Kushain believers from within. Act as their allies and find sympathizers among their ranks.”

In other words, betray humanity. The two messengers were shocked.

“That... would be going against our honor as mercenaries,” Zakusen said

hastily without even the time to fix his frivolous mask.

“Oh, I think you’re gravely misunderstanding something here. The moment you left the human camp and came to our side, you became traitors.”

The Goblin King mercilessly buried that cold harsh truth into their hearts, and though Zakusen understood that full well, he couldn’t help but avert his eyes.

“But...”

“Of course, if you haven’t resolved yourselves, then we can forget about this whole conversation.”

This was not a war between fellow humans, but a war among races. The very existence of a race was at stake here, and the Goblin King would not accept any compromise. To that end, he would use anything he could.

The Goblin King was reminding them just what kind of war they were about to throw themselves into.

It was the least respect he could give for these two brave messengers who risked their lives to come here.

Unfortunately, Tauropa could not understand the king’s good will, and he looked at him with a gaze filled with fury, before turning to glance at Zakusen.

When he saw that Zakusen wasn’t saying anything, he spoke. “We are mercenaries, we—”

But Zakusen cut him midway and spoke in a loud voice. “—Fine! We accept your terms!”

Tauropa opened his eyes wide in shock, but Zakusen ignored him as he looked at the Goblin King.

The Goblin King’s crimson eyes that were as red as blood shot through the humans before him.

“...Very well. I shall believe you then.”

The Goblin King stood up and approached them.

I’m going to be eaten! Tauropa cried inwardly as the king’s ferocious smile grew bigger.

The Goblin King spoke. "State freely your heart's desire! From here on, I shall treat you as allies!"

"I gratefully accept," Zakusen boldly replied.

Tauropa felt his cheeks grow hot at his earlier shameful display. At the same time, he found respect for their vice-leader's guts.

Pale Symphoria left the bar with her hood on and walked through the main street. This was her fourth day gathering information, but she still came out empty. She started gathering information as soon as she parted with the rookie adventurer, Shurei, and the believer of the goddess of healing (Zenobia).

But regardless who it was, when it came to the Elks Clan, all mouths were closed, even the talkative drunks. Pale was again made aware of just how big the enemy was, and that fact made her grit her teeth alone.

Which was why the moment her sharpened senses picked something up, she immediately left the main street and entered into the back alleys.

If she couldn't find a trail, she would just have to lure the enemy to make a trail for her.

So she used herself as bait.

There were several people chasing after her as she passed through the back alleys. Those people kept following her even after she reached the slums.

Pale knew her way around these parts. Adventurers often had scuffles with thugs like the yakuza, so they had to have a thorough understanding of the area they worked in.

Pale had intentionally led her pursuers to a place they could easily attack her.

When Pale reached a dead-end in the slums, at a place that used to be a plaza, she stopped.

She hid the dagger in her hands as she eyed her surroundings.

"What 'cha doing out here all alone, miss?" One man stepped out and spoke frivolously.

"Yeah, yeah... Especially at a time like this. Don't ya know there's a lot of bad

guys out there?”

The sound of two more came from behind, and there was another hiding under the shadow of the abandoned building to the right, stifling his breath.

The earlier man from before didn't seem to like Pale keeping her silence, as he suddenly raised his voice and struck the ground with a rod-like object.

“Tch... It's the boss' orders, so it can't be helped. Just hurry up and die.”

Pale calculated the distance between her and her assailants as she confirmed the sound of footsteps coming from both in front and behind.

Judging from the sound of their footsteps, the people approaching her didn't seem well-versed in martial arts. In that case, the real enemy was probably the one hidden under the shadow of the abandoned building to the right. As Pale arrived to that conclusion, she revealed the dagger she had been hiding all this time.

“Ooh! Pulling something like that!” One of the men said as he played with his rod.

“Take this—!?”

The moment the man swung down with his rod, Pale's body shifted a little, and his rod landed on the ground, giving rise to a cloud of dust.

“KU—You lit-!?”

The man ignored his numbed arms and pursued Pale's shadow, but her dagger had already been thrust at his neck.

“Tell me who sent you and I'll let you off,” Pale's voice was without a hint of warmth as she allowed her dagger to lightly cut the man's skin.

“Eek!?”

The man faltered as he screamed, and Pale followed him to ensure her dagger remained on his throat. But the moment she neared the man, the footsteps coming from behind got her attention.

“Take this!”

“Die!”

Two pairs of footsteps approached from behind. As Pale felt even the sound of the weapons swinging, she slightly moved her dagger and turned her body, and in the next moment, the man Pale was threatening screamed.

He ended up receiving his allies' attacks in her place.

As the enemy behind clicked his tongue, Pale took a step and sent her dagger toward his arms.

She may have been blind, but with her exceptional hearing, she could reproduce an image of her surroundings within her mind.

When the sound of an arrow flying from behind resounded, Pale bent down.

"KA!?"

As the other man behind her cried out in pain, Pale ran toward the direction the arrow came from.

As Pale caught the sound of someone hastily standing up, she threw her dagger toward the enemy.

A muffled noise resounded as the dagger buried itself into the fleeing man's back. After hearing the man fall, Pale went back to the man whose arm had been cut.

She asked him the same question. "Now tell me who sent you."

Seeing Pale brandish her dagger once more, the man shook in fear and confessed.

"...The Dagger of Webrus."

As Pale quietly repeated those words to herself, the flames of vengeance burned within her.



The blade the black-haired swordsman swung was a giant sword as big as he was tall. In the desert, it was a weapon known as scimitar. It was a special kind of sword known for its curved blade, but the scimitar the black-haired man wielded was far bigger than common sense would expect.

The swordsman wielded his scimitar, whose curved blade ran deeper than

that of a curved sword, as he took a light step and watched the lightly-armored swordsman.

The lightly-armored swordsman, whose skin was exposed, utilized a twin-sword style. He was an expert who pursued sharpness and lightness, and was one of the members of a famous clan from the labyrinth city-state, Tortoki.

It was in a small village located between Elrain Kingdom and Labyrinth City-State Tortoki that the Red King Clan and another were staking their existence.

And these two warriors were none other than the warriors sent out by their respective leaders to represent their clans.

“–Shi!”

As the twin-sword user took a light step and started a rhythm, his body blurred and vanished. Or at the very least, that’s how it appeared to the people watching.

Immediately after, the black-haired swordsman swung his sword at the empty air.

The sound of iron and steel clashing erupted, and the twin-sword user was sent sliding across the ground, spitting expletives.

Despite that, however, his stance remained unbroken, but this much was expected of a warrior who carried his clan’s existence on his shoulders.

The twin-swords user allowed the force to pass through his legs and begun preparing for a counterattack.

“GU!?”

But a greater threat appeared as the black-haired swordsman swung his scimitar.

That was a power resulting from a man blessed with superhuman strength that went beyond the first-rate skill of the twin-swords user.

But even if that was the case, the twin-swords user had his pride. If he were to lose here, his family – his clan – would literally be crushed by these men.

He had accompanied his clan for many years now. At the very least, he

needed to fight until the end, so he took on that descending scimitar with his twin swords and allowed its power to take him along.

As a result, it looked like he was running away, but that couldn't be helped. As the twin-swords user jumped back with the impact of the scimitar, something happened that shocked him once more.

He had clearly jumped back, but for some reason, his body was suddenly forcefully brought back to the front. It was as if the world itself was offering him to the black-haired swordsman.

As the might of the scimitar directly fell onto his twin swords that pursued sharpness and lightness, it cruelly smashed them into pieces.

The twin-swords user braced himself for death as the black-haired swordsman pointed his scimitar at him.

"...We lost." The clan leader of the twin-swords user bit his lips in frustration.

The Red King, Brandika, heartily laughed. "Shunrai! Good job!"

The black haired swordsman glanced at the kneeling twin-swords user as he wielded his scimitar again.

"It was a good match. Let's do it again one day."

Then without waiting for a reply, the black-haired swordsman known as Shunrai walked back to his clan leader.

As he did, he noted that Brandika was holding the opposing clan leader's shoulders as they talked about something. Odds were he was promising him their clan's continued existence under the condition they came under the Red King Clan's banner.

Tying his hair into a knot behind him and letting the sides fall just up till the shoulders, the black-haired swordsman hid his mouth with a muffler despite being in the desert. He narrowed his eyes as he watched his clan leader happily talk of his ambition (dreams).

"Good work."

As he was walking back to the clan leader, it was the scholarly youth, Carrion, who called out to him.

“I didn’t even sweat, though.”

Hearing such a large contrast with his remark now compared to when he was talking with the enemy champion, Carrion couldn’t help but make an impish smile.

“Well, we don’t currently have any plans to fight with someone big.”

“In that case, I’ll be hoping we have a change of plans, Genius Adviser.”

Shunrai turned his back right after saying that.

“Ah, man... Oh, right!” Carrion was left scratching his head for a moment, but immediately after, a smile appeared on his face, and he looked coldly at Shunrai.

“According to the Dagger of Werbus, it seems we may have found a survivor of the Elks Clan.”

“Oh? That’s interesting...”

The small opening through the black-haired swordsman’s muffler revealed a fierce smile like that of a beast eyeing its prey.

Chapter 176: The Goblin King's Long Arm

The Goblin King occupied the western territory ruled by Gowen Ranid on the month of Toura, and on the very next month, the month of Rabbit, the Goblin King formed an alliance with the Leon Heart Clan.

The Leon Heart Clan was known for employing demihumans and elves with no discrimination. Of course, they couldn't go as far as to hire monsters, but they could contact them through the demihumans.

The goblin army was able to advance smoothly thanks to the chaos caused by Gi Gi Orudo's monster army that suppressed the small city-states and caused the Kushain officials to cry.

But that was only expected, after all, their numbers were terrifying.

The native beasts could sense whenever the monster army moved, and they would flee almost immediately while carrying with them the fury of having their homes invaded. The human territories received the brunt of their wrath.

The month of Drago could be said to be the start of summer, the season in which the fields would be painted green, but because of the rampaging monster beasts, the crops were devoured and laid to waste, and the helpless farmers could do nothing more than scream and watch.

As for the feudal lords that were supposed to be protecting said fields, they only felt some fatigue and some forlorn thoughts.

The village of Barje northwest of the free cities also suffered the wrath of the beasts.

"The beasts are attacking! They're attacking again!"

As the man that went out to the fields screamed, the entire village stirred.

"Make contact with the feudal lord! Hide your women and children! Men, get your weapons and gather at the gates!"

The village chief, who was at the prime of his life, gave orders to the villagers.

"Village chief, Sonia's missing!"

It was a small village, so everyone knew each other. Because of that they could easily tell when someone was missing. As for the girl named Sonia, she was supposed to have gone out to help her parents with the fields, but...

“Sonia! Where are you!?”

Her acquaintances all called out, not bothering to return to the village.

“Over there!” A hunter said as he pointed to a location.

At the end of where he pointed to was a girl being chased by a triple boar.

“Sonia, hurry!”

The villagers cried out, but the triple boar was too fast, and not even the hunter’s bow could suppress it.

But an arrow did come flying, and it actually managed to hit the boar’s legs, saving the girl, whom everyone thought was a lost cause.

It was not the hunter who shot that arrow but a traveler who was staying here since yesterday.

“Garwin!” The archer called out.

“Yeah!” Another man replied as he dashed out.

Wielding a long axe over his shoulders, it was a warrior who dashed out. In the blink of an eye, the human warrior dressed in leather armor was right next to the girl.

He confronted the beast as it stood back up.

The triple boar charged toward the warrior, but the warrior twisted his body and dodged, then in the next moment, landed a blow on the boar’s front legs.

As the beast cried out in pain behind him, an arrow flew through the sky and landed on it.

“Good job, Fase!”

Though both forelimbs were wounded, the triple boar came charging once more in its fury.

The warrior called Garwin calmly watched as it made its charge, then he used

his axe to bash its head.

As the beast turned over and blood spurted out, a great applause rolled over the villagers.



Not long after the monster attack, contact was made with the feudal lord's army. But when they heard that the beast they were to exterminate had already been taken care of, they were shocked.

Feudal lords generally hated losing even a little bit of their army. Because of that they won't help unless they're absolutely certain of victory.

Compared to them, the adventurers would fight as long as they think they can win. If that's not possible, they can still choose to run during battle.

As a result, there was a great difference in promptness between the carefree adventurers and the feudal lords who had to protect their fiefs.

It's because of that that the feudal lords and the adventurers have a give-and-take relationship when it came to these beasts.

"I give you my gratitude for protecting my fief. Please tell me your name."

Naturally, the feudal lords, who loved to make use of people, would naturally want to keep the adventurers. If a feudal lord could have a famous adventurer stay in his fief, he'd be able to expect a considerable increase in his fief's defensive prowess.

"I'm Fase, and this guy is..."

"Garwin."

The feudal lord nodded as he watched the two adventurers nod boldly.

The feudal lord invited them to his mansion under the pretense of thanking them for protecting his fief, and of course, the two adventurers accepted his offer.

This sort of exchange was actually quite normal. Especially, in the remote regions where there was an abundance of monsters, beasts, demihumans, and even bandits.

“Ho? So you’re from Leon Heart?”

In the evening, while the feudal lord was enjoying supper with the two adventurers, he learned that these two adventurers happened to be a part of a big clan that was deeply rooted in the east.

“I’d heard you worked as mercenaries, so I was expecting you to look rougher...”

Fase, who was a half-human and half-elf, had a wry smile plastered on his handsome face as he shook his head at the feudal lord’s remark.

“Lately, we’ve started to expand to the south. Along with that, many of us have decided to work as adventurers rather than mercenaries,” Fase said as he ignored Garwin, who was wholeheartedly stuffing his face.

“I see... So how long will you be staying here? As you’ve seen for yourselves, the beasts have been attacking frequently lately, so having reliable adventurers such as yourselves would put my heart at ease.”

The feudal lord was finally getting to the main point, but Garwin was still busy stuffing his face with food, so Fase had to clear his throat to get his attention.

“Y-Yeah... The food is great too, so we can drop by whenever.”

Seeing Garwin play the fool, Fase couldn’t help but sigh inwardly as he cleared his throat a second time.

“My lord, I would like to remind you that we’re not a charity.”

Upon hearing that, the feudal lord was visibly discouraged.

Weapons weren’t indestructible. They wore out like other things when used, and the same was true for armors, which would be damaged upon being hit. Money was needed to fight, and people who cheaped out on such things would not live long.

But the feudal lord understood that too, and that was why he was discouraged. He was hoping that they might help them out since they were a big clan.

Fase smiled with that handsome face of his and said, “From our travels so far, we can tell that you’re having a hard time and would certainly like to help.”

“That’s good to hear, but...”

What the feudal lord was worried about was – of course – money. He had to give alms to the Kushain faith, so he did not have much left to spend. If he were to hire adventurers to protect the fief too, he would surely be forced to take out a loan.

The feudal lord may be reckless enough to intentionally charge through a road headed to bankruptcy, but he was yet to abandon hope. Be that as it may, the fact that he knew nothing of the other party’s problems ensured that he would come out the loser in this negotiation.

As the feudal lord resolved himself to see these adventurers off, Fase spoke.

“If you can provide for us lodging, food, and three silver coins every month, then...”

“...What!? Are you sure?”

It was only natural that the feudal lord was surprised. After all, these adventurers could earn as much as a gold coin were they to go to Cultidian, the headquarters of the Kushain faith.

So when Fase offered a sum that the feudal lord could actually pay, he was so moved that he took Fase’s hands and cried.

“...You are our saviors!”

“Actually, it just so happens that our clan’s policy is to help those in need,” Fase said.

The feudal lord nodded in admiration.

But of course, any story too good to be true had another side to it.

A salary of 3 silver coins wasn’t enough to cover weapon maintenance, so naturally, there had to be a reason why the Leon Heart Clan would send people to a land that was under constant attack.

And that reason was none other than to send their forces between the Kushain forces and the Goblin Army.

The small feudal lords that were hurting from the beast attacks desperately

wanted a way out of their predicament; hence, the offer of the Leon Heart Clan was like pouring water on a sandy soil.

As the moons changed, the Leon Heart Clan deepened their relations with the various feudal lords and even the people.

Like this the Goblin King's long arm stretched out for the Kushain believers.

As for those who knew? There were only a few.

At the Fortress of the Abyss, the headquarters of the goblins, Gi Be and the other one-armed goblins instructed the newly born goblins that would become a part of the imperial guards.

It has already been three months since the war with the humans, and new warriors have already been sent to aid the Goblin King in his quest for the south.

After conquering the western capital and making his move to conquer the plains, the Goblin King's need for soldiers has become unquenchable.

After the Goblin King received soldiers from the Gi Village, the four tribes, and the southern goblins, which totaled to almost 500 goblins in three months, the Goblin King set off to execute his plans for the humans of the western region.

The goblins have learned how to farm, but it was limited to the red fruit alone, which wasn't suitable as staple food. Perhaps there might indeed come a time when the goblins could farm on their own, but for now, the Goblin King believed it would be best to have the humans take over the farms.

Goblins and humans have always had a difference in stamina, so after hearing that Gi Go Amatsuki was able to easily eat human bread, the Goblin King made up his mind, and now, goblins could be seen tilling the land.

The Goblin King didn't go as far as to call it the Tuntian System, but he didn't want to leave the goblin soldiers idle either, so he had them help out.

After all, it didn't matter how much food there were.

Hunting was an indispensable method to gather the staple food of the goblin diet, which was meat, but it was no longer sufficient to feed an army of almost 2000 goblins.

The Goblin King knew that breaking the delicate balance of the ecosystem would surely bite them in the rear later, and he also didn't want to consider driving a species to extinction.

With that, the Goblin King decided that they needed to gradually move from hunting to farming.

That being said, it wasn't possible to completely abandon hunting, as it was a necessity for the goblins to hone their skills.

After all, a goblin could only be considered an adult when he is able to perform the three-man cell training and risk his life. The Goblin King himself acknowledges this.

Shumea was put in charge of overseeing the goblin and human farmers, and was presently going from village to village to arbitrate and appeal. This was on top of her duties to watch over the juvenile vagrants that were left behind in the western capital.

Any trouble or dissatisfaction reported to her were immediately passed to the king.

There were nearly 100 children less than 15 years old gathered around Shumea, and whenever she had the time to spare, such as when traveling from village to village, she would personally train them in the way of the spear.

When the Goblin King conquered the colonial city, they acquired enough food to feed 2000 soldiers for half a year. Because of this he was able to exempt the humans from tax for a year.

Shumea was always busy nowadays, but unexpectedly, she loved watching over the kids.

Contrast to her, her younger brother, Yoshu, who was tasked to watch over the slaves, was at his wit's end.

Although they may all be classified under the word 'slave', there were all sorts. Some were swordsmen, some looked after their master, some were bedmates... *etc.*

Yoshu was put in charge of all these different 'products', and he hadn't a clue

what to do with them.

Of the 700 humans under the Goblin King, 100 were children, 400 were slaves, and the rest were either the elderly, the criminals, or escapees.

Even with just numbers alone he already had 4 times more to deal with than Shumea. He had to interview them one by one just to figure out what they could do, and in the end, it took him 10 days to go through them all. Life did not become easier afterwards, as it would take him a great deal of effort to put them to use.

After all, he was all alone. The goblins were unreliable, and while the elves seemed somewhat reliable at first glance, it turns out that they are actually utterly incompetent when it comes to moving humans. In the end, Yoshu had no one to rely on but himself.

Yoshu was so busy that he didn't even have the time to scream as he dealt with the slaves.

In the end, Yoshu left 30 battle slaves to Gi Go, whom he believed was somewhat sympathetic, then he left the slaves that could write and calculate to the elves to support them, while he had the slaves that looked after their master to either look after the elderly of the western capital or help with the farms.

Yoshu happened to bump into Shumea when he went to the farms, and as it turns out, he was so worn out that Shumea went wide-eyed the moment she saw him.

But no matter how difficult the work was, Yoshu eventually managed to deal with it, and the goblin kingdom finally started to look like a proper kingdom.



Elrain Kingdom, wherein the Red King Clan focused most of their activities, was separated into two kinds of lands, one was green and the other was a desert.

In the desert region of the southern part were city-states formed by small villages referred to as Oasis City-State, whose income revolved around merchant caravans traveling the desert.

Naturally, there were various kinds of monsters and beasts lurking in the desert, and one of the source of income of the Red King Clan was to protect these caravans from such threats.

The Red King led the clans under his to subjugate the monsters lurking along the route that the traveling merchants used to go west. It was at a distance about 2 days toward the west.

“Have the rangers look for the ants coming from beneath us.”

The one leading was a muscular warrior.

Members from various clans had come here to support him.

“Our united front (party) seems to be going well,” a pale-faced youth – unfit for the desert, named Carlion – said.

Brandika nodded. “But of course. After all, someone went out of his way to pull an all-nighter just to pick the right people.”

“Well, that’s...”

“What? Embarrassed?”

As Brandika laughed heartily, Carlion scratched his face, troubled.

The Clan Coalition of the Red King would periodically go out to hunt like this to gather experience and deepen relations with the people of the various clans under them.

Whenever Brandika himself is leading, there would always someone good at management to support him.

“Don’t push too far! Just push gradually!”

As the muscular warrior gave out instructions, several party members at the frontline made the signal to show they received orders.

“Sardine is really heated up... I think I’ll—”

“—Don’t. That would be cruel to Sardine.”

Brandika wanted to go to the frontlines, but Carlion stopped him.

“Just a little.”

“No.”

“I won’t take long, promise.”

“No!”

“Just the tip!”

“No means no. Besides, the customers need someone to take care of them.”

Brandika desperately tried to persuade Carlion, not noticing Cell’s gaze from beside him, but Carlion ignored his pleas and looked behind.

Brandika ended up following Carlion’s gaze, and there, behind them, he saw the influential general of Elrain, Kanash, and the clan leaders under their clan.

“Ah~ Well, I guess it can’t be helped then.”

Brandika pouted like a little kid and walked toward those people.

“...I’ve always wanted to ask you something.”

Cell asked as Carlion watched Brandika walk away.

“Yes?”

“Why are you supporting a man like that?”

“Because I want to... Is that not good enough?” Carlion chuckled and looked toward Sardine’s direction.

When word that the anthill of the killer ants had been found came, Carlion knew victory was theirs, so he told Cell to rest and he went back to his tent.

“Hmph...!” Cell snorted as she looked over the clear blue sky and the vast desert.

The desert winds caressed the female gnome warrior’s face, going past her just as quickly as it came.

Chapter 177: Those Who Seek Vengeance

Stooping down at the sound of an arrow shooting from behind, she suddenly felt an enemy jump down from above, forcing her to dash out.

She had a small bow, but without the time to nock an arrow, the enemy shot at her again.

Frustrated as she might be, she had no other choice but to turn around from the narrow street and run away.

“After her!” The enemies cried.

At that, she turned around and shot an arrow at them. She did not have the leisure to aim her shot, but she still managed to reduce their numbers. Unfortunately, it was not enough, and the sound of approaching footsteps sent a chill running up her back.

Pale was currently in the midst of battling the assassins.

She took a dagger from her belt and threw it behind her without turning. When someone screamed, she stopped, turned around, and boldly approached the confused group to retrieve her dagger and attack.

A pair of swords came sweeping at her from the side, but she passed through them and lopped an enemy’s head off. At roughly the same time, a long sword went for her legs, but it hit nothing but air, for Pale had jumped, and immediately after, threw her dagger before pulling another one out.

The thrown dagger made a clanging sound as it hit something hard and was deflected.

“KU!?”

Pale cried out in anguish, but the enemy just quietly swung his sword. She tried to defend with her dagger, but only the hard sensation of an armor was there to greet her, then the sensation of her flesh being torn as something penetrated it invaded her. Pale stifled her cries as she jumped back.

The attack she’d received with her dagger was a single swing; hence, it

reasoned that there was only one foe before her.

As a blind woman, there were still things Pale didn't know despite her superhuman hearing. When she heard her enemy stepping on sand, she woke up from her thoughts and tried to back off, but the enemy chased after her.

With the enemy able to close their distance without showing a single opening, it was clear as day that he was no small fry. He was not like those fodder that Pale had defeated.

From the pressure alone, Pale knew she would die the moment she turned her back. That being said, she didn't know if she could win in a straight-up battle either.

Pale managed to run quite a bit, and judging from the sound of the wind, she could tell that they had already passed the slums. Help probably wouldn't come.

Pale retreated half a step, then she heard the enemy move out.

As the pressure coming from the enemy became stronger, Pale had to fix her grasp on her dagger due to her blood getting on her fingers.

The enemy did not miss that opportunity. His step was heavy, but the sound it made was muted to the limits. That was indeed the skill of a first-rate assassin.

Pale twisted her body to dodge the enemy's approaching dagger.

But then the sound of a 'clink' like some sort of mechanism activating reached her ears, and in the next moment, the blade that should have been dodged tore her hood and unraveled her bound hair.

"An elf, huh," the assassin said inadvertently the moment he saw Pale's long ears.

But he didn't say anything more than that as his killing intent thickened.

Fighting in the narrow back alley up close with this assassin was hopeless, so Pale started racking her brain for a way to get out of this alive.

It was no exaggeration to say that Pale was picking a fight with the assassin clan, the Dagger of Werbus, alone. But now that it was clear that she can't win, she wasn't about to throw her life away.

She took a step back.

Naturally, the enemy would – in turn – take a step forward. Pale didn't have Felbi's talent for the sword, so unfortunately, turning this situation around would be difficult.

At least, it would be if she couldn't use magic.

Pale wielded her dagger to hide her lips to prevent the assassin from noticing that she was chanting a spell, then she took another step back to lure the enemy toward her.

The moment the enemy leaped, she threw her dagger.

“Winds! Give me Power! (Wind Shot)!”

Although its firepower was low, it was a practical spell that was easy to use, and by cladding her dagger in the wind, she was able to raise its speed and strength.

The assassin tried to dodge Pale's dagger, but it suddenly sped up, causing him much surprise as it dawned on him that he wouldn't be able to dodge, so he decided to jump out of the way instead.

The assassin clicked his tongue as the wind-clad dagger grazed him by his shoulders. He turned back to Pale, but she was already fleeing.

But Pale wasn't safe just yet, for her wounds were heavy, and without first-aid, it was doubtful that she would survive.

“She's here!”

4 pairs of footsteps resounded from up ahead.

Pale couldn't concentrate well because of her wounds, so her ability to detect the enemy declined. Pale's breath was ragged as she took out her dagger. She was at a disadvantage, and the longer the battle went on, the more disadvantaged she would be.

So this is as far as I go? Pale thought as she braced herself for the worst when a scream and a jeer suddenly reached her ears.

“Ms. Pale!”

“Shurei, hurry!”

“What’s with these brats!?”

The rookie adventurer, Shurei, and the follower of Zenobia (Goddess of Healing), Rue. They swung their swords and joined the fray to save Pale.

The two of them took advantage of an opening and made their way to Pale.

“In my name, heal! (Heal)”

When Rue chanted that spell, a warm light wrapped around Pale and healed her wounds.

“Why?” Pale asked.

“What do you mean ‘why?’ We can’t just abandon our benefactor!” Rue said.

“We may not have been together for long, but we’re comrades. And, Ms. Pale. I know that there’s no way you’re the sort of person who would abandon her comrades!” Shurei said.

The two were visibly afraid, but they still tried to be as positive as they could be to keep themselves from being overcome by it. Of course, Pale noticed that, and in fact, it was precisely because she didn’t want to drag them into her mess that she left them.

Still, be that as it may, she was still somewhat happy that they came here.

“...And? Are you ready to die with those brats?”

When Shurei and Rue looked at their enemies again, they noted that there were more of them now than before. They had 5 more men added to their ranks, and there were even more coming from behind.

“Kill them all!”

As the enemies charged toward them, Shurei puffed out his chest with courage and stepped forward, but then—

“N-Now what!?”

—The enemies started screaming from the other side. It seems someone has come to their aid.

“Hey! Where are the brats!?”

That somewhat carefree and heavy voice resounded throughout the area. One glance at his sword was enough to tell that he was far more powerful and experienced compared to Shurei.

“Earth! Shoot forth toward the enemy! (Earth Bullet)”

Be it sword or magic, the swordsman excelled in them all. It was a skill reminiscent of the sylph commander, Felbi. It seemed he was deeply blessed by the God of Earth.

Light brown skin, silver hair, and through his bangs, long ears. That was proof that elven blood run thick through his veins.

Blood spurted left and right as he cut open a path through the enemies, but he wasn't fazed even a little. It was the very picture of a warrior chosen by the gods.

“So this is where you were, brats... And, I suppose you're an elf.”

In the blink of an eye, he suppressed all enemies, and suddenly, he was right there before Pale, looking down at them.

The man introduced himself according to the old custom of the elves. “Friend of the North (Noizan Arata), greetings. I am Berg Alsen Royon of the Gnomes. Due to some circumstances, I am currently a traveler.”

“Migrating bird (Royon)? Are you out for vengeance?” Pale asked.

The elves were divided into four races. The sylphs, the gnomes, the undines, and the salamanders. Normally they prefer to be by themselves, but there are times when they leave their village.

The gnomes, for example, have a custom wherein they leave their village and swear not to come back until they avenge their family. Such gnomes who travel for vengeance are usually given the names ‘migratory bird’ or ‘homeless’ in the ancient tongue to make their status clear.

When Berg saw Pale know such knowledge despite being so young, he couldn't help but raise his brows.

“It is as you've said. I'll get straight to the point. There's a question I want to

ask.” There was a hardness and sharpness to his gaze as he said that. “Do you know the gnome sword dancer, Cell Beork?”

The Holy Knight, Gulland Rifenin, who had gathered the refugees of the western capital, was currently in the royal palace with his aide, Yuan.

Gulland had been summoned to the office of the guard commander.

“You came, Holy Knight, Gulland Rifenin.”

Gulland told Yuan to wait before entering the room alone.

“I’m busy. You better not be wasting my time.”

Gulland was already in a horrible mood the moment he entered.

Naturally, the guard commander frowned.

“Watch your tongue, Gulland. There are people who’ve been calling for you.”

“And now why is that? Tell me.”

The guard commander was a traditional high-ranking noble and was in a position with considerable power. After all, he was one of the few powers the king had that could stand toe-to-toe with the royal army under his direct control.

“It’s just a warning for now, but it’s only to be expected what with you associating with dubious people. If you’re a holy knight, you should— Wait! Gulland!”

“I’ve never been fond of lectures. If that’s all you have to say, I’m leaving,” Gulland clicked his tongue.

The guard commander clicked his tongue too and cut to the chase. “Complaints have been lodged. They want you punished.”

“Ho...”

When Gulland turned around, a dangerous glint flashed in his eyes. The guard commander felt his back chill.

“For now it’s just a worthless complaint, but they’ll investigate you for real if the complaints pile up. You understand what I’m saying?”

“Hmph, what a kind guard commander. Thank you.”

“...The king is worrying too.”

“...If that’s all, I’ll be taking my leave. I told you before, but I’m busy.”

“Do you really understand, Gulland!?”

The guard commander yelled, seeming almost angry, but Gulland ignored him and left.

“Goodness gracious, the hero really is a handful.”

When Gulland left, a plump civil official appeared, shaking his head as he stood beside the guard commander and uttered insincere praises.

“Even though he acts so audaciously while hiding behind his achievements, he should still have treated our kingdom’s meritorious guard commander with respect.”

“But that man really is one of the most valuable soldiers of our kingdom. His majesty is even more concerned about him after losing the west.”

“No matter how excellent he is, disrespect to the kingdom can only be poison, never medicine.”

“I know! That’s why I reprimanded him!”

The civil official raised his brows in an exaggerated manner and whispered.

“Good grief, if that hero could just act with a little more decorum, our guard commander wouldn’t be having such a hard time.”

After the west fell and Gulland started rebuilding his army, a delicate change in power at the apex of the imperial court occurred.

The kingdom’s influence had declined with the passing of Gowen Ranid. The defeat of the dispatched royal army and the holy knight who has supported the kingdom all this time, as well as being the king’s right hand man, has greatly wounded the king’s authority.

The holy knights are the pinnacle of martial strength, and as such, incur much envy from others. Nobles who have nothing going for them but their pedigree, in particular, were the most envious of all.

Gulland's irritated footsteps resounded as he left the castle when he happened upon a familiar face, causing him to stop in his tracks.

"Well, if it isn't the great hero," the Ripper Knight, Sivara Bandier, said with a relaxed smile.

"What? Are you going to lecture me too?" Gulland asked, irritated.

"What you on about?" Sivara laughed.

"I was thinking of getting more reinforcements. The monster beasts have been attacking a lot lately, so..."

"Ahh, there have been more beasts lately coming from the west. They've been good training for the soldiers."

"You're the same as ever, I see."

See ya, Sivara waved his hand and went on his way. At that, Gulland too left the castle.

"I have a place I need to drop by. You go back first."

"Weren't you warned just now? I know I should trust you more as your aide, but..."

"...I'm not going anywhere interesting."

Sivara says that, Yuan says that, everyone has something to say. Gulland found that a little embarrassing, and he snorted as he went his way.

The direction he was headed to was a slave merchant's residence in the merchant district.

"This is?" Yuan asked.

Gulland ignored him and passed through the gates.

"Your boss in, yeah? Tell him Gulland's here."

Gulland opened the door and entered. Seeing him act unusually high-handed, Yuan swallowed his questions and quietly watched.

"T-The master isn't around..."

Gulland grabbed the servant by the chest and spoke with a threatening voice.

“Tell your master, Gulland is here. There won’t be a second time.”

The servant screamed as he ran back in.

Gulland wore an unhappy face and turned to Yuan.

“What?”

“I would rather not have my boss sued for intimidation...”

“Don’t worry about it.”

Really, now? Yuan thought as he sighed and his stomach churned. The residents of the western capital mustn’t be thrown away even in the worst case scenario.

If a problem were to occur with this man, he would have to lead the western capital’s people himself.

“I-I-If it isn’t Master Gulland!”

That rolling voice came from the rising merchant that picked on Reshia.

“Nice house... Looks like you’ve been raking in the dough.”

“W-W-Well, o-of course. Everything is due to your excellency’s grace.”

Seeing the merchant visibly acting suspicious, Gulland smiled fiercely and forcefully had the merchant invite him in.

“T, To what do I owe, the pleasure of this visit?”

The merchant visibly scared out of his wits, Gulland became the very picture of haughtiness, as he sat himself on a sofa and crossed his legs.

“Money,” he curtly said.

Ah, it’s over, Yuan thought in despair as he looked up to the heavens. This would probably be his last day working for Gulland.

“I’m not asking you to give me money, I’m asking you to *loan* me money.”

“...H-How much?”

Gulland did not miss that dishonest twinkle in the merchant’s eyes.

“500 gold coins... The interest... Let’s make it about 0.5%,” Gulland caressed

his burly chin as he spoke in a cold voice.

“T-This is daylight robbery!” The merchant screamed.

Gulland stood up and approached the merchant. “You should be able to take out that much. Considering you’re wallet is heavy enough to hire an assassin... What? Ain’t you’re pops a huge merchant over at the Shushunu Holy Kingdom?”

That was clearly a threat, but it was indeed a fact that this merchant had brought a person without permission into the royal castle. There was also that matter with Reshia, so he was in no position to reject Gulland’s demands.

The merchant was on the verge of crying by the time he nodded.

Gulland left the premises.

“...Just know that I won’t be there to help you when you stand in court,” Yuan said.

Gulland snorted and waved Yuan off like shooing a bug away.

“Good heavens... At least, try not to get stabbed from behind.”

It was almost time for the soldiers’ training, so Yuan left Gulland and went back to the eight western fortresses where the people of the western capital were waiting.

After that Gulland headed to the slums. Being home to the needy, its public order was horrible despite being in the king’s city.

Gulland entered a sloppy bar that also served as a brothel. He was looking for someone. When he found that person, he’d already been drinking here since this morning. That man’s body odor coupled with the surrounding stench of liquor resulted in a fetor so horrible it could make one puke his guts.

Clothes that hadn’t been washed in days, and a leather armor so dirty its original color was already a mystery. The man embraced his short spear as he drank his fill.

Hair grew in a deep corner under his eyes, and there was a scar extending from his forehead to his cheeks. The man was the very picture of a fiend.

“I’ve been looking for you, Belthazar.

“What business does the hero have with me?” Belthazar spat as he glared at Gulland.

“Work,” Gulland curtly said as he threw a pouch full of silver coins before the man.

“...I refuse.”

“You’re daughter’s name was Liza, if I recall...”

“That’s...”

“What is she doing now?”

Belthazar was silent.

Gulland continued, “The details of the job is simple. Go to western region and lop off some goblin heads. A gold coin for every rare, 5 for every noble. Beyond that, I’ll pay appropriately.”

Gulland and Belthazar glared at each other, but the first to turn away was the latter, who stood up.

“That includes the coin for your preparations. You’ll be leaving in 10 days with the others. Of course, I don’t want a word of this to anyone.”

Belthazar didn’t say anything as Gulland turned around.

“I’ll be expecting, Belthazar, the Almighty Spear.”

Gulland knew that the king was wholeheartedly focused on defending, but as someone who has fought them twice, he knew full-well that defending against them was only asking for defeat.

One reason was because their rate of growth greatly surpassed that of humans. Even Gowen, who excelled at training soldiers and who never managed to find a right-hand man, would need 2 years to train proper soldiers.

But the goblins only needed one year to create such a fierce army. If they were to hide in their shell like a turtle, they might be able to prolong the war, but they would never win against the goblins.

Gulland couldn’t go against the king’s orders.

The best case would be if the goblins were to attack here on their own accord.

The small fortresses that Yuan and his western region citizens garrisoned could take even three times as many goblins as they'd fought. They could even defend for an entire year, so long as they focused on defense.

Which is why Gulland was willing to throw away his pride to dirty his hands with something like 'strategy'.

He would use money to buy life and shave away at the goblins' numbers. If that didn't work, he could provoke the goblins and not give them any time to sleep.

Gulland finally realized that the reason Gowen left Reshia's escort to him was because he wanted to have someone who could lead others, even if it was only one person.

"A little too late for that, shit..."

The great threat that was the goblins and the responsibility of protecting the country weighed heavily on Gulland's shoulders.

Gulland grit his teeth at the great loss of losing people.

10 days later, the people Gulland contracted left the capital quietly. Their destination was the western capital.

Chapter 178: The Blade That Does Not Rot

The Goblin King's advance guard, Gi Gi Orudo the ancient beast tamer, Gi Zu Ruo the mad lion, and Gi Ji Arsil the Assassin were advancing toward the south. They have made it their policy to meet together once a day.

Presently, they were not moving but were instead searching their surroundings as the king had instructed them.

"I wonder if the humans aren't going to send someone to hunt today too," Gi Zu said unhappily.

"You don't look happy," Gi Gi said as he stuffed his cheeks with the meat his tamed beast handed him.

"Do you have a problem with the king's orders?" Gi Jii glared sharply at Gi Zu.

"No, but there aren't a lot human villages here, so..."

"And the beasts also need to be—"

"The scouting too, no matter how many people we have—"

Gi Zu groaned as he watched Gi Gi and Gi Ji's eyes twinkling.

The king's orders were for the three of them to report on three different matters.

Gi Gi was to report on the condition of his beasts as well as the food, Gi Zu was to report on the condition of the human villages, and Gi Ji was to report on the geography of the area up ahead.

The goblins were skilled walkers, and they could reach the territory of the Kushain believers within 8 days, but the king had explicitly told them to slow down their pace and gather information.

Territories in the free cities weren't clearly defined, and soldiers had to patrol along the villages that were built along the borders.

The Kingdom of Germion had never gone past the borders of its western region. The western region may have boasted a population of over 10,000 humans and flourished under Gowen's rule, but its scope was limited only to

the area from the western capital until the colonial city.

In the same vein, the territories connecting to the borders of Germion Kingdom were ruled by the small feudal lords of the free cities. People living in such lands could be a group of pioneers who reclaimed a land, cultivated it, and started living on it; they could be a group of settlers sent from a nearby village; they could also be the supporters of a noble who'd lost in a power struggle. There were all sorts of reasons, but in general, people who lived in the borders were usually people with little power.

Of course, if they're able to lead a group of pioneers, then they must have some degree of leadership; or if not, then perhaps a powerful sponsor. But regardless, the distance between the people and the feudal lord in such lands wasn't big.

Even the bigger pioneer groups would usually only have 300 people at most, so they were few enough in number that they could see each other everyday. And naturally, even if you don't like the person, if you see them everyday, you're bound to know them.

As such, emotions naturally form between the feudal lord and the people. Unlike the aristocrats in the big cities, aristocrats in the borders rarely treated their people harshly.

The people also have more power, as they are able to see the disposition of the next feudal lord. If the next feudal lord is too cruel, then there would be a trend to prefer a different one.

After 2 or 3 generations, the feudal lords living along the borders have finally started to become a little bigger. Growth meant more villages under them, as well as small feudal lords wanting to throw their lot with them, but there were also people who would want a growing feudal lord to fall before becoming trouble.

Life along the borders was harsh.

Feudal lords would sometimes come warring, thieves were prevalent, farming did not make enough money, but the most problematic of them all were the monster beast attacks.

In the early days, the feudal lords in the borders were most concerned about monster beasts and farming.

Conflict among humans was their second biggest concern, and in fact, even Gowen, who ruled the western region, shared this sentiment. Because of that he didn't try to provoke them, and instead focused on developing his villages toward the north.

He then decided to try and make use of the Forest of Darkness' wealth. After which, upon becoming stronger, he would then try his luck at conquering the south.

Gowen did not share his plan with words, instead he executed it. His actions were able to fool even King Ashtal, and for a moment, there was friction between the two of them, friction that would quickly be settled as the goblin threat grew too big to ignore.

For over 10 years, Gowen and the free cities focused on dealing only with the natural calamities and the monster beasts, allowing them to successfully increase their strength.

The first generation feudal lords were still in active duty due to their ability and popularity, so they were able to create many brilliant successors.

The Goblin King was not able to see that far, but inferring from his experience and knowledge, he figured that a human who could cultivate unexplored lands like the humans of the Forest of Darkness would surely not be incompetent.

Looking at the previous battle, there was Gowen Ranid, who was an old but powerful enemy, and looking toward the south, there was the giant country that was the free cities. Naturally, he would consider such nations neighboring his Forest of Darkness to be the end of his borders.

Having thought to this point, the Goblin King had no choice but to act prudently. What he feared the most was the appearance of a 2nd Gowen Ranid. He didn't want a powerful warrior as an enemy either, but a powerful ruler was an even bigger problem.

Despite that what made the Goblin King decide to move for the south was the existence of the Kushain believers. He saw a path through his chance meeting

with the patriarch, Benem Nemush.

This was information he got from the Leon Heart Clan, his human allies.

The free cities had been split into two sides, the north and the south, and was in chaos due to Nemush' holy war. It was still a mystery how their conflict would affect the borders, but the Goblin King believed that it wouldn't be a problem.

The Germion Kingdom to their east had several small fortresses on their side of the border. But they were by no means infallible should the Goblin King decide to gather his forces. That being said, destroying them would only serve to make his relations with Germion Kingdom irreconcilable.

The goblin forces numbered approximately 2000, that included both the elves and the demihumans. Adding the newly added Leon Heart Clan, they had no more than 3,000 soldiers.

The Goblin King did not believe it was possible to conquer Germion Kingdom with only 3,000 soldiers.

Because of that he decided to set his sights on the free cities to the south instead. He would conquer them and increase his allies, and then he would conquer Germion Kingdom.

Having thought that far, the Goblin King was faced with another question: How would he accomplish that?

The humans were unlikely to submit to him were he to merely take them by force. What would be most preferable was if they approached him instead and clung to him.

If so, then what would he have to do to make that happen?

There were three things.

One, he needed to rid them of prejudice; two, he needed an enemy that was more atrocious than the goblins; and three, he needed to show his power.

The hardest of the three was the issue of prejudice. As for the remaining two, he could deal with them later. Showing his power, in particular, was quite easy.

All he would need was war.

Moreover, he would not be waging war on the small feudal lords, instead he would be waging war on the enemy that is more atrocious than the goblins.

Such an enemy was currently making its presence felt in the northern part of the free cities. The Goblin King felt bad for them, but unfortunately, he needed them as a stepping stone. The Goblin King believed it would be possible to show his might by waging war on them.

As for the last remaining issue, the issue of prejudice. This was indeed the most difficult problem. But unless he solves it, it wasn't likely that the small feudal lords would come to rely on them.

If there isn't a way to solve an issue in one fell swoop, then he would just have to take it slowly.

Not killing humans needlessly, even going as far as seeing them off to their territory, not imposing unreasonable taxes on them, and not making them suffer... Everything was for the sake of solving that last problem.

And the ones who have been tasked with that important task was the Leon Heart Clan, who accepted even demihumans and elves into their ranks.

If they weren't around, the Goblin King would have worked alongside the elf, Felbi, to realize his plans, but now that they've come, it would be a pity to waste such good pawns.

Would humans refuse a helping hand in time of need? The answer is no. It doesn't matter what their intentions are, when a helping hand is offered during a crisis, the humans will surely take it.

The Goblin King's long arm stretched toward the borders of the small feudal lords.

TI Note: Sardine to Saldin as requested.

The Red King Clan had a wizard. His name was Grave Neil, an old wizard who made his name as an enchanter.

He was born as the second son to a smithing family, and it was not until he'd turned 14 that his talent was recognized. Since then he has been wholeheartedly honing his talents, and after over 40 years, he has finally

become an accomplished wizard.

The enchantment that he uses could imbue all sorts of elements into armor and weapons. For example, he could enchant a spear with the element of lightning, and it would possess the power to paralyze those it cuts. He could also enchant a sword with fire, and enemies wounded by it would suffer burns.

He could also enchant armor.

An armor enchanted with the element of wind would become as light as feather and a pair of boots enchanted with the element of iron would be extremely hard.

“Hey, Saldin! The army is moving too fast! Don’t you have any respect for your elders!?”

“What the hell you going on about, gramps? Didn’t you just tell me not to treat like you an old man!?”

“Don’t you know how to accommodate others!?”

“Don’t you know how to not spout sophistry, gramps!?”

Although his personality could use some work, he was an experienced adventurer with a wealth of connections and the skills to get him named as one of the best of the Red King Clan.

“Come on, you two, let’s not fight. We’re going to be negotiating with some people now. If we show up in a foul mood, they’ll look down on us,”” Carlion said.

The muscular Saldin cut him. “Is there even any point in negotiating? What’s that clan called? Flying Swallow? I know they’re famous, but...”

“Sigh, this is exactly why having a squad of nothing but muscleheads is a pain!”

“What did you say?”

Saldin glared at the old wizard.

“You’ll regret it if you look down on the Flying Swallow Clan. As their name says, they go around the world freely like swallows. We can’t just charge into

their headquarters like we did to the Elks Clan. Besides, they also have many famous adventurers within their ranks that are renowned throughout the world,” Grave said before reminding Carlion that they’re the last clan they should be making an enemy out of.

“Don’t worry, we’re not going there to pick a fight,” Carlion said.

“...I’d hope so.”

“Well, aren’t you an amazing pessimist, huh, gramps,” Saldin said to mock Grave.

At that, the old wizard took the staff in his hands and started chasing after Saldin all over the place. Unfortunately, for the old wizard, Saldin was a warrior in charge of the frontlines while he was an old wizard in charge of the rear guard. It did not take long before the difference in stamina started showing.

“What’s the matter, gramps? Did ya break your hips or something?”

“You little... GAH!?”

Grave desperately chased after Saldin despite his ragged breathing, but no matter how hard he ran, he just couldn’t catch up to him.

The place they were headed to was south of Elrain Kingdom, the mid-sized city of Saprur. It was located midway to one of the founding nations of the Free Cities, the merchant nation, Penia.

“Long time no see, Lord Wyatt!” Grave said.

The tall man smiled and bowed. “Sorry I wasn’t able to write. You seem to be doing well, old teacher.”

After the Herculean, Wyatt, left the Holy Shushunu Kingdom, he went to the Free Cities. One reason was because of the clan request, the other was because of his personal interest in the Red King Clan.

“The clan leader (Arcs) gives his regards too.”

“For poor old me? There’s no need, really...”

Wyatt led them into a trading company, causing them to all raise their brows up.

“Lord Wyatt, that’s...”

“It’s owned by a childhood friend of mine. Don’t worry, it’s a trustworthy place.”

Such places were usually used by influential merchants.

“As expected of Lord Wyatt,” Grave wryly smiled, and Wyatt smiled back.

The influence of the Flying Swallow Clan had not only reached the adventurer’s guild but also the merchant’s guild. That was made obvious just now, and everyone from the Red King Clan couldn’t help but become confused. Of course, not one of them allowed that to show on their face.

Neither Wyatt nor the people of the Red King Clan wasted their time and they immediately started talking. After all, time was a precious commodity to every one of them.

“A treaty of nonaggression?” Wyatt tilted his head upon hearing some unfamiliar words.

“Yes. Our Red King wishes to form an alliance with the Flying Swallow and its associates. This is the first step to realizing that goal,” Carlion spoke politely. He was singlehandedly responsible for Red King Clan’s negotiations.

“Hmm...” Wyatt became thoughtful.

Carlion continued. “We are new to the south and would like to avoid conflict with the influential Flying Swallows.”

At first glance, his words might seem humble, but considering what happened to the Elks Clan, they could also be taken as a threat.

“Very well. I shall personally propose it to our clan leader,” Wyatt replied.

The people connected to the Red King Clan were all shocked. Who would’ve thought that talks would go this smoothly?

“But I have a condition,” Wyatt added.

“...Which is?”

“You don’t have to be so nervous. I just think it would be best if we also shared human resource on top of our cultural exchanges. Will you accept these

terms?”

When Wyatt suggested that, Grave and Saldin turned to Carlion.

Carlion nodded with that ever smiling face of his. “But of course, if anything, to have such terms with the famed Flying Swallows is our honor.”

“I see, but you won’t get anything out of me flattering us.”

Wyatt laughed heartily and Carlion smiled back.

After Carlion and the other two left the trading company, they talked about Wyatt’s terms as they walked.

“Was that a good idea, genius adviser?”

“We have no choice but to accept it. At the very least, that’s what I believe.”

The most important part in this trade was to form good relations with the Flying Swallows Clan. This was a plan to try and change the Red King’s image by forming good relations with other powerful clans. This was a necessary step now that they had several clans under their banner.

After all, no one would actually want to approach an ill-reputed clan that did whatever it pleased.

“The war with the Elks Clan allowed us to show our strength. With Lord Grave’s connection and Lord Saldin’s abilities in war, so long as our clan leader is able to gain popularity, the Red King Clan would surely flourish.”

“Then why did you have to pick the Flying Swallows?” Saldin asked unhappily.

“Because I believe it would be best to avoid friction with others while we’re trying to stretch our wings. Power is something one should use only when necessary. Don’t you agree?”

“Well, yeah, but...”

“Besides, this is also a good opportunity to see the internal affairs of the Flying Swallow.”

“...If we are able to, anyway,” Grave added as he and Saldin both tilted their head in puzzlement.

“Gramps, how much can that Wyatt uncle be used?”

“Well, his personality is what you’d call ‘firm’. As a warrior, he’s only really good at defense, but he could probably stop Lord Shunrai.”

“That seemingly good-natured uncle?”

Saldin couldn’t believe his ears as he imagined that black-haired swordsman from the Red King Clan.

“He’s pretty calm now, but he used to be a demon in the battlefield. He would wreak havoc with Congo, a halberd made out of blue-silver steel, in his right hand, and Fudou, a magic steel shield, in his left hand. You would have peed your pants if you were there,” Grave said as he thought back to the past. “Ah, but lately, I hear that he’s already sealed both those weapons and has shifted his focus to bettering himself as a person. He must have calmed down a lot with the years.”

“...Let’s hope that’s true.”

That day, the Flying Swallows Clan and the Red King Clan formed a treaty of nonaggression and promised to share the profits of the east and the south. They also promised to share human resource and to send exchange students three at a time.

With this agreement, the Red King Clan has firmly rooted themselves into the southern region and the Flying Swallows clan was able to avoid having an all-out confrontation with an up-and-rising clan. As for which of these two mid-sized clans took the upper hand in this treaty, it was still a mystery.

Belthazar the Almighty Spear and the other bounty hunters left the fortress and headed north.

“If the goblins are ruling the humans, then we’ll take advantage of that.”

Every one of these bounty hunters had a guilty conscience; hence, it only stood to reason that the person leading them would be someone like Belthazar whose skill was the real deal.

“Will we really alright with an uncle like this leading?”

That being said, there were still people who weren’t happy with his leadership. Especially, the young and talented sore losers.

The one who said that last sentence was a young swordsman.

“If you have a problem with me, get out and fight on your own. It’ll do you good to remember that we’re not comrades,” Belthazar said sharply.

The young swordsman stood up, pulled his sword out, and pointed it at Belthazar.

“I don’t see why I have to obey you either,” he said in a provoking voice.

“...”

As Belthazar stood up and took out his short spear, the other bounty hunters egged them on.

“What a troublesome uncle...”

For a moment, it looked like the young swordsman would simply sigh, but then in the next instant, he suddenly came slashing down for Belthazar’s neck.

“—Die!”

The swordsman’s face twisted into a demon’s as he slashed down sharply. The sharpness of his blade was a testament to his unpolished genius.

But Belthazar stopped down and easily dodged his attack. At the same time, he used the butt-end of his spear to hit the swordsman in the chin and send him flying.

“GU, FU!?”

Whether he’d accidentally bit his tongue or simply cut his mouth, blood suddenly came spurting out of the swordsman’s mouth.

Belthazar’s attack didn’t stop there. After hitting the swordsman’s chin, he spun his sport spear and struck at the swordsman’s shin.

The swordsman screamed and squirmed, but Belthazar sent another strike toward his arms.

The swordsman glared hatefully at him, but Belthazar coldly received that hateful glare as he kicked the young swordsman away.

That last kick landed right at the swordsman’s solar plexus, causing him to spill his last meal.

As the swordsman squirmed on the ground, Belthazar quietly approached him and kicked him on the face.

Even the bounty hunters egging them on finally became quiet upon seeing Belthazar's skill and cruelty.

But even as they went quiet, the sound of beatings never ceased.

The swordsman had his nose broken and the interior of his mouth cut before he could no longer move at all. Only then did Belthazar leave him alone.

"Anyone else has problems?"

That concluded the introductions, and Belthazar became the leader of this group of bounty hunters.

After that they left for the western capital.

Pale Symphoria went with the gnome warrior, Berk Alsen, to the small country of Fenis from the small nations.

Pale felt sorry for getting the rookie adventurer, Shurei, and the goddess of healing follower (Zenobia), Rue, caught up in her problems, but they insisted in coming along, and in the end, it was decided that it would be safer for them to be beside a strong ally like Berk than to be by themselves now that they were being pursued.

"We've formed a contract, right!?"

"I said until we save my brethren—"

"But at this rate, Ms. Pale will fall into danger again!"

"That's true, but..."

Surprisingly, after Pale left the two, they immediately ran for the adventurer guild and looked for someone who could act as a guard. But they had too little money on hand, and no one was willing to accept their request. Especially, since their enemy was the Dagger of Webrus.

It was then that Berk appeared, fresh from the southern desert with barely any idea how human society worked. He was charmed by the thought of saving his brethren, so he accepted the contract.

After saving Pale, it was decided that Berk would talk to his clan leader first. Pale meekly obeyed, as the fatigue from the last battle had made her realize just how foolish it was to challenge an entire clan alone.

“...Ahh, a word of advice.”

The place they came to was the small country of Fenis, a country renowned for protecting elves. For some reason, Berk became fidgety the moment they stepped foot on it.

He spoke to his three traveling companions. “...The clan leader is extremely strict and tends to resort to violence easily. The clan leader is what you call your stereotypical thug. I’ll explain everything, so you guys just quietly listen.”

At that explanation, Pale and the others glanced at each other.

“Will this really be ok?”

It was Pale who asked that.

Unfortunately, her worries only received an unsure reply of ‘maybe’.

Passing through the main street, and then the back alleys, they found themselves before a declining bar. After Berk confirmed that it was the right place, they entered.

“...Heaven Restaurant.”

That suspicious name left Rue looking like she was about to cry as she glanced pitifully at Shurei.

“What are we going to do, Shurei?”

“W-We have no choice but to go!”

When they entered the inn, they saw a black-haired woman in revealing clothes, sleeping as her feet laid brazenly on the table.

As Berk approached her, young Shurei was left staring in wonderment.

But of course, such a reaction was only normal considering Shurei was a healthy young boy in the presence of an almost naked woman who was blessed with both beauty and assets.

She wore a pair of leather sandals known as Ganika, a skirt with a slit long

enough to show off her thighs, and a strip of clothing just enough to cover her abundant breasts. Her clothes were so revealing it was enough to make wonder if she had actually forgotten to put on her clothes.

If that revealing tunic of hers was indeed her real clothes, then it was doing a horrible job of covering her honey-colored skin.

“...Shurei.”

As Shurei felt himself stabbed by glares, he woke up from his moment of stupor, and immediately turned the conversation to Pale.

“Is that woman the clan leader?”

Meanwhile, Berk was shaking the woman’s shoulders. As the drooling woman opened her eyes, she saw Berk’s face. In the next moment, she frowned and sat up.

From Shurei’s perspective, the clan leader was an extremely beautiful woman. The way she looked as she folded her arm and listened to Berk was just like that of a brave heroine.

But as soon as their conversation ended, the female clan leader stood up, grabbed Berk by the chest, and headbutted him.

“GUO!?”

Berk cried out in pain as he crouched down.

“You idiot! Why did you bring a job that doesn’t pay!!”

Her angry voice resounded throughout the entire bar, and immediately after, she turned to Pale and the others. For a moment, they thought for sure their hearts would stop.

Her pair of lifted eyes were sharp like that of a predator eyeing its prey. They were beautiful indeed, but that only served to make them even more terrifying.

“Idiot! Don’t you understand how dire our financial situation is!? It’s precisely because we don’t have any money that we ended up in Fenis!”

“B-But that’s because you...”

“What did you say!? Are you blaming me!?”

As the woman went on and on, Berk's voice gradually became weaker. After a while, the woman, who had been spouting abuse from start to finish, turned her sharp predatory eyes from Berk to the three guests.

At this point, Pale and the others had already been petrified by the entrance of the inn.

"Eek!?" Rue inadvertently screamed out loud.

Unfortunately, there was no more running, as the female clan leader was telling them with her finger to come.

The three approached the female clan leader with much fear. In response, the master of fear sat herself on her chair, and brazenly placed her right leg on the table.

"So, how much did you bring with you?" The female clan leader said as she sighed and yelled angrily at the workers to bring more liquor.

"U-Umm..."

Shurei and Rue looked at each other. To them, it felt like they were being told to hand over their money.

"I take it you are willing to accept our request?" Pale asked as she took off her hood.

"Hah? Well, in that case—"

"—Clan leader!"

As if to stop the clan leader from speaking, the doors of the shop suddenly opened, and 10 seemingly vulgar men entered one after another.

Clicking her tongue, the clan leader frowned as she looked toward them.

"Can't you see I'm talking with someone, shitheads!? Didn't your mothers teach you to shut up when people are talking!?"

"...Hey, who's the target?"

The person who looked like the boss of the 10 vulgar men ignored the female clan leader and asked that question. When he saw Pale, he drew his sword.

"...Berk, bring me my sword."

The female clan leader's face twisted into a smile. Her pupils were wide open with anger and her smile was equally evil.

Berk rubbed the part where he'd been headbutted as he handed an odd sword that was both thin and curved.

The female clan leader took her sword without turning to Berk, then as she exhaled, she assumed her stance.

The female clan leader played with the sword in her hands as she smiled like that of a predator eyeing its prey. At the same time, she viciously licked her lips.

"Woman, if you get in our way, we won't show you mercy."

Unfortunately, that warning only served to rouse her anger.

"Come, underling. I'll cut you into pieces."

In response to the assassin's warning was a heavy-toned sneer that seemed to make one's long black hair stand on end.

"...Kill them!"

Immediately, the assassins came leaping for the female clan leader. These assassins were unlike the ones that Shurei and Rue fought. These were real assassins, without the slight waste in their movements.

The female clan leader compressed her body and rammed it into the assassins, then in the next moment, three flashes flashed in the span of one breath, the curved sword moving out of its sheathe, and suddenly, the assassins that had attacked her had all been cut down.

Seeing that, the assassins couldn't help but be shocked, but the female clan leader didn't even pause for a moment as she took a step forward and attacked another three times. Each time her blade flashed, the assassins' numbers would dwindle.

"Ha."

Her beautiful smiling face twisted even more, as blood spurted everywhere according to the trajectory of each slash. On the floor, on the walls... Everything was being dyed in blood.

It was an unfamiliar sword style, but her black hair would sway with every stroke swung, blood spurting to the air with each flash. It was almost as if she were dancing, and that fact, only served to accentuate her beauty.

While Shurei was captivated by her swordsmanship, before anyone knew it, there was only one assassin left.

“Who are you!?”

“Hah? Did you pick a fight without knowing who your enemy was? Trash.”

Brushing off the blood from her curved sword, she sheathed her sword once more. As she assumed her stance again, she smiled cruelly.

“Come, it’s time to die. Know that the one who killed you is Vine of the Burning Bright Moon. Send the goddess of the underworld (Altesia) my regards!”

“You’re the mad blade of—”

Without giving him the time to finish, Vine’s sword cut him from the stomach to his chest. In an instant, the assassin’s life was severed.

“Hmph, small fry,” Vine spat as she sheathed her sword and briskly walked back to where Pale and the others were.

“Now then, where we’re we?”

The way Vine looked as she licked the blood of her foes from her cheeks was truly like that of a laughing demon.

Intermission: Study Time

Status	
Name	Gi Za Zakuend
Race	Goblin
Level	97
Class	Shaman
Subleader	
Possessed Skills	Magic Manipulation; Three-Verse Chant; Chant Cancel; Wind Guard; Wind Control; Guidance of the Goddess of Knowledge; Adherent of the King; Ether Transference (Previously Ether Movement)

Divine God of Wind
Protection
Attributes Wind
Abnormal Possessed
Status

The king is generous as expected.

I tried asking for a private room to aid my research, partially sarcastic, but to my surprise, he actually gave me one. Moreover, he gave me a tenth of the western capital. That being said, this might have been for the best, as we goblins do not actually know how to make use of the city.

For example, Gi Ga Rax’s imperial guards.

Their loyalty to the king is admirable, but aside from Gi Ga, the strongest of them are rare classes.

For goblins like that, who have been living in the forest their whole life, it won’t be easy adapting to the city.

Of course, they can at least wash themselves, but other than that, they are hopeless... They leave the blood of the beasts they eat on the ground, and they wait for the rain to wash it away, causing the stench within the city to accumulate, giving rise to unprecedented levels of repulsiveness.

It was such a repulsive smell that even that elf called Fei couldn’t help but make a face that look like he’d eaten a fly.

“What do you think?” He asked.

It’s funny to watch, but it’s a hassle to get involved. The expression on my face was probably the same as Fei’s.

“...They need to be taught,” I said.

Please stop looking at me with those eyes that says you’ve found a comrade. I don’t like elves.

“As one would expect of Lord Gi Za. What about that one?” Fei pointed toward the direction of the araneae demihumans.

They were diligently wrapping the buildings in their spider threads.

His highness has indeed left the security to them, but he has never told them to cover the buildings in their own threads.

Lord Nikea is a serious woman, but some of the araneae under her can sometimes be irresponsible depending on their mood.

If I recall correctly, that should be where the messenger of the Leon Heart Clan is staying at.

“Do they... Eat buildings?” I asked, partly in sarcasm since they were originally supposed to be under him.

Fei replied without the slightest hint of timidity. “Lord Shure prefers to leave them to their own devices. It is actually quite troublesome.”

‘That’s your master you’re talking about there!’ I wanted to interject, but I swallowed those words and turned to the elves instead. They were currently bulldozing buildings via the minotaurs and growing trees in their place.

“Hey,” I called out.

“Yes?” Fei replied.

“What are they doing?”

If they want to grow trees, they should do it outside. We’ve finally acquired a human city after so much effort. What’s its point if we don’t make use of it?

“They are growing trees,” Fei said matter-of-factly. “Apparently, they were having difficulties getting sunlight.”

This one’s also a problem...

“Well, it is a city built by humans. We need to modify it, so that it can be easier for us to use,” he added.

Fei hummed as he watched the elves work.

“You elves don’t consider growing trees to be your *raison d’etre*, do you?” I asked.

“*Raison d’etre* doesn’t sound very good. I’d prefer you refer to it as our noble duty. Besides, the bigger the forests, the less room there is for humans to live in. The beasts will also increase, and your kind will find it easier to fight. Yes?”

That certainly sounds appealing, but it sounds fishy.

“Since when did you start thinking like that?”

“About 80 years ago. Anyway, I believe we should change this area into a wonderful forest as soon as possible.”

This elf’s frame of time is all over the place.

As I thought, I really don’t like elves.

After leaving Fei, as I was walking on my way, I noticed, from the corner of my eye, that the king’s beast was rubbing herself on a building.

“What in the world are you doing?” I asked her.

This is something I learned of just recently, but apparently, this big wolf can understand what people say.

“Can’t let the bad bugs near dad!”

In other words, it’s that. She’s marking her territory. I don’t understand it very well, but it seems, they have some sort of hierarchy they adhere to.

That being said, she doesn’t really need to worry about other wolves. The only wolf who’d try to approach his majesty is her, after all.

“I see, do your best.”

“You bet!”

The gray wolf, that his majesty calls ‘Cynthia’, walked away with an air of composure.



Within the territory I was given was a place I could call my private room. It was fairly big and the piled up wooden boxes were useful for storing things. I could even change their height by moving them around. It was truly novel. We didn’t have such things back in the forest, so I had to ask Yoshu what it was called, and as it turns out, the humans call such places ‘storehouse’.

Humans sure come up with interesting things.

“Gi Za, are you in?”

While I was caught up reading the book I got from that old elf, Falun, I heard his highness call for me.

Apparently, he'd gone out of his way to personally visit me. Good grief, he could have just had someone call for me if he needed something. Well, he is an honest man, I suppose.

"Yes?" I greeted.

"Are you busy?" He asked.

The king tilted his head in puzzlement as he gazed into my room.

In response, I showed him the book in my hands and shrugged my shoulders.

"Reading, I see. My apologies."

"It's fine. Did you need something?"

"Yes, actually..."

For some reason, the king did not have that usual powerful aura about him. Even that chest of his that appears so big whenever he faced his enemies seemed so small. That ever confident smile of his was also missing. It was as if he was troubled by something and hadn't the slightest bit of strength. He was frowning and seemed to be troubled. Even his tail was swaying all over the place.

What's wrong, Your Majesty!?

"Actually..."

His words were weak and powerless.

What in the world happened? Just where did my resolute king go!?

Is he sick? Could he have caught some sort of sickness that weakens one's resolve? Gastair might have some medicine... No, maybe I should check with Kuzan first!?

"...I would like you to teach me." The king said in a very thin voice.

I was taken aback for a moment, but soon afterwards, I nodded.

Apparently, the king wanted to learn how to read.

If that's all he wanted, he should have just said so! Because of all that fidgeting of his, I ended up worrying about all sort of things.

"Yes, but it seems that I just can't learn it..." The king said with a troubled face.

For the meantime, I decided to start with the basics.

"I see..."

Seeing his highness memorize all the basic characters in half a day left me with no other thoughts than 'As expected of the king.'

"As expected, your memory is far and above the norm."

"My teacher just happens to be good, that's all."

Hmm... Teacher, huh? That's not bad!

Unfortunately, while I was feeling elated, someone just had to show up and rain on my parade. Of course, it was none other than that unlikeable elf, Fei, who came with a bundle of documents.

"Oh? What are you doing?" He asked.

"...It has nothing to do with you," I sourly said.

"I'm learning how to read," the Goblin King said.

Fei's eyes opened wide as he left the bundle of documents on the desk.

"I see..."

The way he looked alternatingly between me and the king was just like that of a predator.

I need to get rid of this elf.

"It seems you've already grasped the basics," Fei suddenly said. "In that case, you should start studying how to use them. In other words, literature. I think this subject might be a tad too difficult for Lord Gi Za, however."

"...Bastard," I snapped. "I've always wanted to settle scores with you. Let's do it! You and me! Now!"

Get out, you blasted elf! Unconsciously, I called upon the power of the wind.

For some reason, the wind spirits seemed to be cheering me on.

“Well, well, aren’t we quite gutsy? To think you’d actually challenge an elf to a contest of magic!” As Fei smiled, wind ether also started to gather around him.

“Enough! We’re taking a break! A break!” The king yelled.

As a result, we ended up putting off our duel for another day.

Still... That bastard, Fei.

Just you watch! One day I’ll break that nose of yours! I swear!

Chapter 179: Expectations

“Should’ve said you had money in the first place,” Vine heartily laughed as she led Pale and the others to the deserted village south of Fenis.

The money Pale had given Vine was enough to build a house.

When Vine saw how much Pale was paying her, that devilish smile on her face was quickly replaced with a naughty cat’s charming smile.

The change came so quick that the gnome warrior, Berk Alsen, couldn’t help but sigh.

It has already been 7 days since Pale and her group was able to secure the help of the Red Moon Clan. In that time they managed to find out the whereabouts of the survivors of the Elks Clan.

As soon as they caught wind of that information, Pale immediately asked that they find them. In response, Vine smiled wickedly and nodded.

“You realize they could already be dead, right?”

The information they received was already over 10 days old. It wouldn’t be strange if the Dagger of Webrus had already gotten to them.

“Perhaps, but I still have to go.”

With Pale’s mind set, Vine could only agree.

The deserted village they were headed to would take 5 days on carriage. With nothing else to do, Shure and Rue asked Pale about herself.

Touri Nokia was the man she admired and Ryutanu was her first kouhai.

Their time together wasn’t without hardship, but it was certainly fun.

While Pale and the two talked about such things, Vine focused solely on her liquor, while Berk drove the carriage.

“By the way, you guys are unaffiliated, right? How about joining our cla— Why are you hiding behind the elf?”

Berk suggested to let Vine drink to keep her mood up. As a result, she’s been

drinking nonstop since this morning. It was a mystery if what she said just now was a joke, but because of that, Shurei and Rue were huddled together as they trembled in fear.

“You can choose to remain unaffiliated if you want, but you’ll have a hard time. Right, Berk?” Vine said as she tasted her liquor.

“The trustworthiness of a guild is different from that of lone wolves, so the remuneration received is usually a league lower,” Berk seriously said as he drove the carriage. He seemed used to handling the drunk Vine.

Seeing Berk seriously reply, Vine snorted.

“Mr. Berk, why did you become a member of the Red Moon Clan?” Shurei asked.

Berk’s face dimmed a little, but neither Shurei nor Rue could see his expression from behind.

“My village is located in the south. We used to be from the north actually, but we moved some generations ago. We make our living by hunting the sand whales in the sand sea.”

“Your story is too long!”

Jeered at by Vine, Berk cut to the main point. “It was then that I met the clan leader. At the time, there was trouble within the village, and I ended up becoming a Royon and entered the Blood Moon Clan. I came to the north in search of information when you two caught me.”

“So you haven’t been a member for long?”

“That’s right. He literally became a member just a month ago.”

While Shurei and Rue were understanding the situation, the drunk woman suddenly interrupted their conversation.

“What? Feel like joining now, Rue-chan?”

Before anyone knew it, Vine was behind Rue and was hugging her. Her hands moved freely over Rue’s robes as she fondled her body, causing Rue to scream.

“Ha, P-Please stop!”

“R-Rue!?”

“Mn~, you need to grow a bit more... At this rate, you won’t be able to get the man you like. I’ll play the nice big sister and help you...”

Rue tried to break free, but her attempts were meaningless before a warrior as accomplished as Vine.

“Won’t you enter our clan? If you enter our clan, Shurei won’t have a choice but to enter as well.”

“W-Why!?”

“Huh? You won’t join? Then I guess that means Little Rue is mine...”

As Rue’s cheeks were dyed red, Vine smiled wickedly toward Shurei.

“No, s-stop!”

“...Clan leader, you’re taking it a bit too far.” Berk said calmly.

“I think so too.” Pale agreed.

Having been reprimanded by both Pale and Berk, Vine let Rue go and went back to drinking.

“Complaining about the way I invite others... What has the world come to? Sigh... could have killed two birds with one stone too.”

Like this their group traveled to the deserted village in the south.



In the north-western part of the free cities, where the border regions were and where Gi Gi and the Leon Heart clan were carrying out the Goblin King’s schemes, was an opportunity ripe for the taking.

The small feudal lords had convened a meeting to come up with a plan against the endless wave of monster beasts.

Mediating them were the adventurers sent by the Leon Heart Clan. The feudal lords already trusted them when it came to matters surrounding the beasts.

Approximately two months have passed since the Leon Heart Clan started their operation, and Garwin and Fase were staying at the mansion of the feudal

lord of Shirak.

The mansion of the Shirak Territory that ruled three villages and a town was the closest to the goblins and also suffered the most under the endless wave of monster beasts. After repeatedly suffering under the oppression of the monster beasts, the feudal lord of Shirak finally decided to propose a plan and seek help from the other small feudal lords.

Of course, Garwin and Fase had also advised him. Presently, the feudal lord trusted them enough to consult them on matters regarding the defense of his territory. Even the people trusted them.

Small feudal lords consider each other as powerful rivals, but at the same time, they also consider each other as comrades when calamity strikes.

“...I thank god that we are able to gather here today at Sanktfall.”

After the feudal lord of Shirak opened the meeting, the gathered feudal lords immediately started discussing the topic at hand.

“As you may all know, this meeting’s purpose is to tackle the issue of the monster beasts.”

The feudal lords from the pioneering generations did not experience the same difficulties as Shirak Territory, but they still discussed the topic seriously. They had no choice, for they knew they would be next if one of them were to fall. The feudal lord of Guena, who was hiding under the shadow of Shirak, understood this well.

But in the end, they could not arrive to a conclusion. After all, if they could find a solution in the first place, they would not have waited this long before addressing the issue.

“Can’t we figure out why the monsters are rampaging?” Asked one feudal lord.

“We could gather our knights under one group,” suggested one feudal lord.

“We need to create an impenetrable wall against the monsters!” Suggested another.

“In the end, the issue is money,” the feudal lord of Shirak sighed.

Normally, these feudal lords should've been making a killing considering the previous western feudal lord, Gowen Ranid, hadn't waged war against them. Unfortunately, because of the alms they had to give to the Kushain faith, they were currently so poor that they found it difficult to hire even two skilled adventurers.

None of the small feudal lords had the guts to go against the great wave that was the Kushain faith, so the creed of the Kushain faith quickly spread from the large cities until it reached the very borders of the northern free cities.

When the meeting was starting to go nowhere, the feudal lord of Shirak adjourned the meeting.

They had began the meeting in the evening, but it was now morning. At this rate, the participating leaders won't last. Besides, it was doubtful that any of these leaders would propose a good idea with the way things were going.

Like that the exhausted feudal lords retreated to their rooms.

"How was it?" Fase, who was currently working as the feudal lord of Shirak's bodyguard, asked.

The feudal lord only weakly laughed in response.

"...I see. As expected, these feudal lords are also starving for money."

"It's a pity, but if they had money, then they wouldn't have moved to the borders in the first place."

Fase folded his arms and closed his eyes. After thinking for a moment, he spoke. "...We have some new information."

"What is it? If it can break us out of this deadlock, by all means, please."

"Actually, our vice clan leader, Zaurosh the Lord Commander, is coming."

Excited at the prospect of possibly breaking out of their current predicament, the feudal lord eagerly lent an ear to Fase.

"If it's him, he might have an idea."

"Is he good?"

"The clan leader himself is young, but it's because of him that our clan is able

to operate. The Lord Commander is a man the clan leader trusts dearly. He's a good man, in my opinion."

Fase was a skilled adventurer who was always composed. The feudal lord of Shirak greatly valued his abilities.

"How is he compared to you?"

"I'm afraid I'm not even worthy to be in the same sentence. Perhaps I might be able to eek out a win with my bow, but he is a skilled swordsman with both prudence and the connections. He is beyond me."

Fase wryly smiled and shook his head, but his words greatly roused the feudal lord's excitement.

"And that Lord Zaurosh is coming for what purpose exactly?"

"That, I'm not so sure. All that was mentioned in the letter was that he was coming to see the situation."

The feudal lord sat back up straight and folded his arms.

It is said that a drowning man would cling to something even if that something is nothing but a straw. The feudal lord racked his brain as he sought to see through the purpose of a great clan's vice clan leader's visit, but the information he had was insufficient. All he knew was that he trusted Fase.

But he couldn't be blamed for that, after all, it's no easy feat to hate someone who risks his life for you with barely any remuneration. All the more so, when that someone is able to get results and protect the people.

If he thinks their vice clan leader is a good man, then at the very least, he wasn't a villain.

"If it's no trouble, I would love to meet him. If possible, while the feudal lord conference (Sanktfall) is still open."

"...I'll send him a letter by bird then. I can't guarantee anything, but this is the method we use when contacting each other for urgent matters."

"Thank you."

Three days later, Zaurosh arrived.

Gi Gu Verbena was wounded in the western region war and could not fight alongside the other goblins in the quest to conquer the western capital. Though his wounds have long healed, the regret he felt that day burns within him yet.

“I lost to the humans. That in and of itself is unforgivable, but even worse, I lost personally.”

Gi Gu Verbena was the leader of the southern goblins and had the greatest army among the goblins with the exception of the king. Not even the fierce Gaidga Tribe nor Gi Gi’s army could match the scale and power of his army. Gi Gu Verbena was given the honor to lead the advance guard in the previous battle, but in the end, he lost in the hands of the human, Gowen Ranid, the feudal lord of the western region.

To make things worse, not only had Gi Gu betrayed the king’s trust, he even lost to a human. There was no greater humiliation.

“But the humans were really strong, Great Brother!”

“They were really strong.”

“Right! Right!”

The three sibling goblins Gu Long, Gu Big, and Gu Tough tried to console Gi Gu, but their attempts only fell on deaf ears, as Gi Gu himself had already arrived at a conclusion on why he lost.

The power of numbers. It was with the same strategy that he once conquered the south. In fact, Gi Gu himself had not fought many battles where he had less numbers than his opponent.

“We shall expand our territory.”

Which is why when Gi Gu suddenly said that, the three sibling goblins were shocked.

“But the south is all sand...”

“Sand is hot...”

“Won’t the king get mad?”

The three goblin siblings each voiced out their concern.

In response, Gi Gu nodded and said it was alright. “The forest will always be our home. Besides, we’re not expanding toward the south but to the west. We... will have to send a messenger to the king.”



Ever since the Goblin King occupied the western region, he has been busying himself with government affairs in the western capital. Unfortunately, he still couldn’t read the writings of this world. He has put much effort in studying it, but he still couldn’t read anything harder than reports.

Beside the king was the elf from Forni, Fei, and the goblin druid who studied for a short time at the elven school, Gi Za Zakuend.

All sorts of information were being brought to the king. Gi Gu Verbena’s request to expand his territory, the Leon Heart Clan’s report on the affairs of the south, reports by the elves on the state of the villages, reports by Shumea and Yoshu on the dissatisfaction of the humans... all sorts.

One reason they could gather information so easily despite using the western capital as their headquarters was because they were close to the frontlines.

The Goblin King also had no choice but to work near the frontlines due to him being acknowledged by the goblins as their strongest. It simply wouldn’t do if the strongest goblin warrior weren’t present in the frontlines.

To protect the town areas, the Goblin King asked the chief of the araneae, Nikea, to take charge of security. As a result, they have created a complex encampment by weaving together their threads.

The defense of the eastern part of the western capital was left to the “Man-Eating Snake” Gi Ba Hagar. The humans had eight small fortress on their side of the border, so all trade was currently halted. Monsters also frequently fled to the eastern region due to Gi Gi’s monster army.

The monster beasts would sometimes also go toward them. After all, they were monsters. They attacked everyone without discrimination, so Gi Ba had set some patrols to protect the humans on their side, but so far, there have been no problems.

In the south, Gi Gi Orudo, Gi Ji Arsil, and Gi Zu Ruo have currently stopped

their respective army's advance and were observing the situation. Depending on the Leon Heart Clan's progress, they might have to move further down south soon. Their three armies were more than enough for an advance force.

As for the main force that would naturally include the Goblin King himself, Gi Rax and his imperial guards, Gi Do Buruga's druid platoon, and perhaps some of the human platoons.

The western part of the western region was given to the yugushiva and the demihumans. The Goblin King only demarcated its borders before leaving it to them to manage. He also hasn't imposed anything on the demihumans other than the construction of the facilities along the roads connecting the Forest of Darkness and the western capital. The demihumans were few in number and weren't suited to fighting in the frontlines, so the king didn't bother to ask too much from them.

That being said, what they lacked in number, they made up for in quality. There was no doubting that they were powerful warriors indeed. Which is why the king decided to use them sparingly. The Goblin King greatly valued their abilities, and this was while they were only starting to learn how to fight a war.

As for the northern part of the western region, it was a wooded region and was being used to house the defeated humans. Shumea and Yoshu have been put in charge to ensure that they are able to live alongside with the goblins. Thanks to the help of the elves, the northern part is currently being used as the center of agriculture.

The humans farmed mostly grains, which were strong against the cold, and the goblins were also tasked to learn from them. Harvest was still some time away, but it could be expected half a year later.

Information on the affairs beyond the borders were also regularly being passed by the Leon Heart Clan, but they had their limits too. One of the information they shared was the fact that the holy knight, Gulland Rifenin, has been made in charge of the western region, which was currently under goblin rule.

Gulland Rifenin was a man who could fight evenly with the king. Alone, the Goblin King could take care of him, but things might go differently if he had

someone with him.

The clan known as the Red King was also gaining momentum in the southern desert region of the Free Cities. They were hostile to the Kushain Believers, so the Goblin King believed that he might be able to pit them against each other if he used his cards right.

Several cities leaning toward the Kushain Faith has already capitulated and returned to the south due to the Red King Clan's activities.

If their momentum were to grow too big, they could have a negative impact on the king's plans to bring the small feudal lords to his side.

The Goblin King's scheme relied on the fact that they had no one else to rely on but them, after all.

As the Goblin King managed the affairs of territories from every direction, the next report that came in made him raise his brows.

"Reshia..."

The Saint, Lady Reshia Fel Zeal, had helped the wounded demihumans of the small country of Orphen to the north and were keeping them close.

Word of the Saint left the king speechless for a moment as he felt both impatience and relief stir within.

It is known that military officials often butt heads with civil officials. That is true even for Germion Kingdom or the Holy Shushunu Kingdom.

Military officials criticize civil officials as heartless people who freely play with people's lives through their papers, while the latter would criticize military officials as delusional fools who believe money grow on trees.

Issues between the two branches can sometimes threaten the very existence of the country, so it is up to the king to ensure that the two remain suppressed.

In one sense, it could be said that the military and the civil bodies are the wheels of the chariot, and it is up to the king to ensure that they remain on track.

A country that fails to do so would naturally fall off course.

In which case, the people will fall into misery, the country will be taken advantage of by other countries, and...

“Lord Kanash, your fame might be known throughout the world, but we cannot accept this! Our country cannot endure any more wars!”

The meeting was being held at the pillar of Elrain Kingdom, within a room in the royal palace.

It was a slim civil official who said that previous line in a loud angry voice.

“Even if the treasury can’t take it, the enemy is already on its way! Are you telling me to order my subordinates to die meaninglessly!?” General Kanash yelled back as he stood up from his seat.

“But we don’t have what we don’t have!”

“Well, do something! Isn’t that your job!?”

“In the first place, if you hadn’t lost in the last battle, we wouldn’t be in this situation!”

“You bastard! Is that the way you treat the people who risked their lives to protect the country!?”

One provoked, and the other bit. They were supposed to be in a meeting, but they were only arguing with all of their arguments running parallel each other’s.

Within that heavy atmosphere that was tensed to the limits, the clan leader of the Red King, Brandika, yawned. Carlion, who was behind him, chuckled when he saw how bored he was, but he still made sure to prod him with his elbows and remind him to act appropriately.

“This is a waste of time. Can’t we go home?” Brandika said.

“That won’t do. At the very least, we need to stay until the end,” Carlion replied.

When the civil official saw Brandika looking so bored and Carlion acting like he was watching a funny play, his eyes opened wide. From his perspective, it seemed like they were making fun of him, so he turned his verbal assaults from General Kanash to Brandika.

“In the first place, it’s because you had to hire mercs for such a stupid price that the military went over budget! Isn’t the fact that you had to resort to hiring mercs the same thing as admitting your incompetence!? Why do you we even have an army!? Just who do you think allows you to hire these money-grubbing pests!?—”

As the civil official was ranting angrily, Brandika suddenly slammed against the desk, causing cracks to appear over its marble surface.

“...If you don’t want us, we can leave anytime,” Brandika said. “Just pay us for the time we’ve worked.”

The aura emanating from Brandika was just like that of a beast’s as he glared sharply at the civil official. He was an accomplished warrior who has gone through many battlefields and was the clan leader the Red King Clan. The intimidation from such a man was indeed not something a civil official could handle, as the civil official very quickly went quiet and paled.

“T-That’s...”

“Hey, Carlion. Our contract was sealed with the kingdom’s symbol, right?”

“Yes, I’m sure of it. I have it with me, so I can bring it out for confirmation if needed.”

All the civil officials participating in the meeting were all looking down and speechless. At the end of the day, the army was indeed incapable of bringing as much results as the Red King, and the civil officials themselves couldn’t fork out the money to pay them.

“...That won’t be necessary.”

It was General Kanash who said that in place of the civil officials.

“It is embarrassing for someone in my position, but we need your help, Clan Leander Brandika of the Red King Clan. Please lend us your strength. If you leave now, we won’t be able to hold the line against the Kushain believers.”

The Ashunasan Alliance has indeed been established, but without a proper mediator, their forces were currently being dispatched according to each country’s discretion.

“General Kanash, I personally see you as a friend, but I am also a clan leader, a person responsible for the lives of others. Borrowing your words, I don’t want to order my men to die meaninglessly.”

They couldn’t fight without money.

“That’s...”

General Kanash turned to the civil officials, but everyone was looking down.

Kanash endured the urge to click his tongue as he proposed an idea. “Very well. In that case, I will use my properties to...”

“Clan Leader, that is too intangible,” Carlion interjected.

“Hmm... Really?”

“Yes, they’re essentially telling us to put it on their tab. Moreover, if we take a look at the army’s current situation...”

Elrain Kingdom was already at the point where they were unable to pay their soldiers’ wages on time. It was indeed true that the national treasury was at its limits.

“Which is why, I have a different proposition,” Carlion winked at Brandika, then he stood up and said that to the various officials.

Unlike Brandika, Carlion was far more delicate and had no intimidating aura about him. He was just like the civil officials, so they were quick to lend an ear.

“In exchange for our services, we ask that our clan leader, Brandika, be given court rank and be made ruler of the city of Saprir.”

“What!?”

“That’s...”

The civil officials were speechless, while Brandika only frowned as he folded his arms and sat on his seat.

Carlion smiled as he continued his proposition.

At the top of Elrain Kingdom was the king, followed by the few royal court nobles, and then the civil officials and the nobles with territories.

The nobles with territories would receive a court rank from the king according to the size of their territory. Their territory itself is the source of their power. Of course, the royal family also has its own territories. Which is why, the royal family is really nothing more than the noble with the most territories.

Carlion's request implied two things to the civil officials.

One was that they had no intentions of standing in opposition to the royal family of Elrain Kingdom. The other was that they will exert their utmost in this war.

Managing a city required certain qualifications. In this country, that qualification was a court rank, but to receive a court rank is to acknowledge the royal family and come under it.

Sapnir was a medium-sized city. If Sapnir were to be given to them, they would need a fairly high court rank.

The civil officials were happy to acquiesce Carlion's request. After all, court ranks did not need money and it was better to sell off a city than to pay up now. Looking at it long term, they were giving away a city that could produce a great amount of wealth, but looking at it short term, they were simply covering the costs of hiring a massive merc organization.

But of course, the most important reason of all is that Elrain Kingdom could no longer do without the Red King Clan.

"We will consider it," a civil official said.

At that, Carlion bowed and returned to his seat. No one noticed the smile he exchanged with Brandika as soon as he sat.

The next day, word of Brandika receiving the title of count and the territory of Sapnir got out.

Intermission: Villainous Thoughts

TI Note: Note that the Elks Clan is written as Soar to Freedom or Flight to Freedom.

Name	Ryutanu Organdia
Race	Human
Level	78
Job	Expert Adventurer; Subleader
Possessed Skills	Strong Arm; Axe Mastery B+; Bat Eyes; Kleptomaniac; Hundred-Demon Slayer
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

Damn it all.

We may not believe in god but that doesn't mean we deserve this. We staked our lives and saved every coin we could just so we could leave that rotten alley, and this is how we end up?

Even Touri couldn't escape alive.

Fighting with those heavy wounds really wasn't a good idea, but he had to to help us escape. Those worthless quack doctors said they did their best, but what's the point if they couldn't save the guy!?

Gash was like an elder brother to me, Connery was like a younger brother... And now, after running for who knows how long, they're gone... all gone.

Damn it! Why?

Why did everyone have to die and leave me behind?

It's been 6 days since I led the survivors to the abandoned village of Fenis.

Who knows from where those Webrus whoresons will attack us.

There's only 40 brats left now.

Just a year ago we were a clan of 300 elites, and now... All we have is this place, if we lose it too, we really won't have anywhere else to go. Everyone here is just a brat, after all.

All the veterans died to help us escape, and I had to watch after these brats since elder sister (Pale) was no longer with us. The duty of teaching these kids ended up being pushed onto me.

Because of that I'm still alive. What a disgrace.

Shit, elder brother (Touri)... Why d'ya have to up and die, huh, Touri?

Every one of us is a feather headed to freedom, and what binds us is our mutual desire to fly toward that freedom. Isn't that what you taught us?

So why? Why did you have to die before me?

You picked up the brats with no place to call home, raised them up, and helped them walk under the fire god's body. We've been growing these past 10 years doing just that.

"Elder brother, I brought you your meal. Kirina made it."

While I was fixated on the map, Sophia brought me a loaf of bread.

"Have you eaten?" I asked.

"Of... course." Sophia replied.

What a horrible liar. Her eyes are all teared up.

"I don't feel like eating. You eat."

"But!"

"Shut up and eat."

After being strongly chided, Sophia meekly bowed her head, then she took the bread and left.

Damn it, if Pale were here, she would have been able to tell her off more gently.

I really suck with kids.

I ignored my stomach's pleas as I glared at the map.

Is the southern border being watched?

The public order should be good until the Holy Shushunu Kingdom, so our situation could turn for the better, but...

While it would be great if we could leave straight through the west, they're probably watching the western border. Looks like we'll have to keep our foot in some other country's border.

The northern woodlands and the southern desert.

Unlike elder brother (Touri) or elder sister (Pale), I suck at using my head. It would be a lot easier to just swing my weapon in the frontlines, but by some odd stroke of fate, I ended up being the brains.

“Elder brother, the enemy are attacking!” Sophia came back and said.

“Wake everyone up! Use the buildings as shields! We’ll stop them!” I ordered.

Upon receiving my orders, Sophia nodded and ran away.

I took my axe.

Burn all them shitty bastards of Webrus! I’ll kill every last one of ya!



Attacking during the night... Just the kind of tactic you’d expect from some cowardly assassins.

Unfortunately, for you bastards, you’re not the only ones who can see in the dark!

“Sophia, Kirina, cover me!”

“Understood!”

Under the cover of those with similarly good night vision, I took a step forward.

“...Looks like there’s still a big one left. Ryutanu the Strong Arm! 5 gold coins for his head!”

“Hyaha!”

As an assassin chuckled a stiff laughter, I swung my axe. There should be at least 20 enemies here.

“Hah! This is a piece of cake! Don’t underestimate the commanding officer of the Elks Clan’s shock corps!”

As soon as I stepped out, a throwing dagger was thrown at me, but I deflected it with my gauntlets and continued on my way. Enemies came at me from both my flanks, but I knew that the archers behind would be able to cover me, so I

ignored them and swung my axe.

The enemy's head split open like a pomegranate, but I didn't stop moving. I took another step forward and claimed the headless corpse as my shield.

"Kill him!"

Think you small-time thugs can take me!?

Another dagger was thrown, and this time I deflected it with my corpse shield that I'd flung over my shoulder, then I went and rushed toward the tensed part of the enemy encirclement.

"Don't tense up!"

"Eek—"

One of the small-time thugs cried out as I crushed his head, then I continued on to take out another 3 of the nervous enemies, cutting them down from shoulder to chest, then I threw my corpse shield to stop the enemy from moving.

In that instant, I took my axe out from the last enemy I'd cut and swung it toward a new enemy.

The future, my dead comrades... I don't need to think about any of those right now. Right now, all I have to do is kill these bastards.

As blood sprayed onto my face, I bellowed out a howl.

"Damn it!!"

I used to hunt beasts, but before I knew it, I was already an expert at hunting humans. As I lifted up my head and eyed the approaching three assassins, I rushed out once more.

One of the assassins tried to cut me, but I jumped onto his chest and slammed my gauntlet into his face, then In almost the same time, I smoothly moved my axe with one hand to hold it with both hands and unleashed a sweeping motion, beheading the two cowering enemies.

Finally, I finished off the last remaining enemy that was powerlessly groaning.

"Tch... Useless."

One of the enemies, who was raising hell, came to view.

“If you’re so tough, why don’t you come yourself!”

I shook off the fleshy bits stuck to my axe and fixed my stance. After a quick check to ensure that the archers from behind were continuing their suppressive fire, I bolted off once more.

I don’t know if it’s because I got drunk off the enemy’s blood or if I’d simply let my guard down, but...

“Go!”

Two assassins equipped with long swords ran after me, and I tried to sweep them away.

“Fool! Shoot!”

It was an attack coming from a blind spot, so I couldn’t react in time. The enemy shot their weapons without any regard for their own allies.

The two assassins in front died instantly as their bodies were penetrated, and unable to stop my own momentum, those two arrows buried cleanly into my body.

Fuck it all! These people aren’t humans!

One on my shoulder and another on my left flank, but I had to keep going.

The path was finally clear, after all! I won’t get a better chance than this!

“GURAAaAAa!”

Bellowing out a cry, I charged toward the enemy, swept with my axe, and crushed the head of the guy who looked to be their commander.

As soon as he died, the enemy ran away scattered and screaming, but I didn’t have the strength left to pursue.

Fuck, it’s getting dark. They poisoned their...

“So you’re Ryutanu? I heard you’ve been a bad boy lately.”

Ahh... I know this is a dream, but... it’s so nostalgic.

Elder brother, Touri.

“Hah? Who the hell are you?”

That must be me when I was just a little hoodlum. What a horrible face. My eyes are rotten... Well, I did spend everyday without any hope, so I was basically just rotting away.

Right. That time I was beaten black and blue... And I realized I could never win against him.

“...Are you ok?”

Ahh, what a sorry sight. This was also when I met elder sister (Pale). She called Touri elder brother and followed him from behind like a baby chick.

At that time, I... Right. It's embarrassing, but at that time, I thought she was a princess.

Ridiculous, really. I've never even seen one.

“You're a big guy.”

After being beaten black and blue by elder brother, she looked at me with an odd look as I laid sprawled over the ground.

I remember her face even now. Her golden hair fluttered in the wind as she looked at me curiously with those dazzling jewels she had for eyes and walked around me.

She was brimming with curiosity, but she also seemed a little scared of me.

Now that I think about it, that might be when my heart was stolen by the princess.

I lived a shitty life through and through, but that meeting is the one thing I take pride in. We may have lost everything, but the one saving grace was that she didn't get caught up in this shitty war.

“As promised you'll be joining us. Ryutanu... Oi, Pale! You'll be looking after him!”

“Ehh!? I will!?”

“From now on you'll be in charge of the new recruits.”

“You never said that!”

“Well, I thought of it just now!”

Elder brother laughed and elder sister made a troubled face as she rested my head atop her knees. A lap pillow, in other words.

I was red to the ears.

“Are you hurt anywhere?”

A stupid question. Looking for a place that didn’t hurt would be easier than the opposite.

“Nah...”

Until then, the only women I’ve known were prostitutes. It was my first time seeing such a beautiful princess.

I don’t know how to put it, but boys have their pride.

“Allow me to introduce myself. I am Pale Symphoria. I started following leader 6 days ago.”

“...Ryutanu.”

Elder sister smiled at me just like a blooming flower. Who would’ve thought someone like me who has never studied poetry would think such flowery thoughts.

A few days later... I can’t remember where we were then, but the skies were clear that day.

“Ryutanu, you don’t have a last name?”

“For a ruffian like me, just having a name is plenty.”

“Really?”

By entering the Elks Clan I found a place I could belong. I was no longer in that rotten alley, but a bright place that the sun could reach.

“Then let’s give you one.”

“It’s fine, it’s not like it bothers me.”

“That’s not true. We elves put a lot of importance in our ancestors.”

Elder sister sat beside me and gently patted my good-for-nothing head.

“Ryutanu, one day you’ll find a wife and have children, and then those children will also get married and have children of their own... And what connects all of you is your last name. So a last name is very important!”

I didn’t have any parents or siblings, so to me, the only thing I could call family was the clan itself.

“Hmm... How about ‘a gentle person’ (Organdia)?”

“Erm, how about something cooler?” I said with much embarrassment.

Elder sister shook her head and laughed. “I know your secret, you know. You secretly use your salary to buy sweets for the young new recruits.”

“T-That’s...”

I panicked. I never thought I was being watched.

When our clan welcomed the juvenile vagrants officially, I saw myself in them, the old me who had nothing to eat and desperately endured the hunger, so I wanted to help them.

“That’s why Organdia. Because at the very least that’s how I see you.”

I fell in love with the princess. That might seem like such a weak thought for such a big man, but what can I do, I fell for her.

Unfortunately, she only ever had eyes for elder brother.

I wasn’t blind. I could tell. So I stopped thinking about it.

The princess and I were too different, anyway. I had to start calling her that too, because otherwise, I really wouldn’t have been able to keep my feelings in check.

Elder sister was really special.

You could call her a tactician. As long as we followed her, every battle could only end in victory.

That was the Soar to Freedom (Elks Clan) that we built up for the last 10 years.

Elder brother came to be known as the “Herald’s Wings” and elder sister came to be known as the “Silent Moon”. I also received an embarrassing second

name: Strong Arm; but in truth, it was the two of them who supported the clan.

What she gave me was a warmth no one else could replace.

That's why when she went back to the forest, although I felt sad, somewhere someway, I heaved a breath of relief. After all, I knew just how ugly a war between humans could get.

I wasn't so foolish as to believe that our happy streak would continue forever. That's why I happily saw her off.

Elder sister, please be happy.

I'm sure... everyone thinks the same.

I'll do something about the remaining members. Maybe we'll become bandits or something... I'm sure I can at least protect a bunch of brats.

So... I don't mind even if it's just in dreams, but just a little, let me hear your voice...



"Tch..."

"Elder brother!"

"Shut it."

I woke up my creaking body. When I saw the blood-dyed bandage wrapped around me, it finally hit me that an arrow had penetrated me.

"How long was I out? What's the situation, Sophia?"

"Ah, you were out for a day. Dagger of Webrus hasn't attacked at all since. Kirina is currently scouting."

"I see... When is she coming back?"

"In 2 hours."

"Good. Get ready. Since they've found our location, they'll definitely come again. We should leave before then."

"But your wounds..."

"Hey, hey, something like this is just a scratch. What do you think Master

Ryutanu the Strong Arm is made out of, huh?"

It was cramping, but I somehow managed to squeeze out a smile.

Suddenly, something hit the door and everyone tensed. Glancing at Sophia, I signaled for her to see who it was.

She opened the door slightly, and...

"Kirina!"

"Ku... Sorry! They got me!"

Immediately after, Kirina jumped into the room. On her back were 2 arrows stuck to her body.

Seeing her grasping for her life, the flames of wrath burned within.

"They'll pay for this..."

Very soon blood flowed from her back.

"We're fighting back. Buy us some time!"

At my command, Sophia and the others started shooting arrows through the windows.

"Elder brother... I'm sorry. El, der."

She probably couldn't see anymore, but she reached out, and I grasped her hands.

"Don't worry. A little blunder like this won't faze this elder brother of yours. I am Master Ryutanu the Strong Arm. Everything will be just fine."

Her breath gradually grew fainter. Damn it. Damn it all. She's not even of age yet.

"El, de...er, I... El, er..."

Just like that another life passed in my arms.

Tightly grasping her cold small hands, I burned its warmth into my heart, then I put on my leather armor and took out my axe.

Bastards, all of you! You'll pay for this! You will!

Chapter 180: Soar to Freedom

TI Note: Note that the Elks Clan is written as Soar to Freedom or Flight to Freedom.

A man clad in black spoke to the swordsman beside him. He did so while watching the fierce battle occurring before his eyes.

“So that’s Ryutanu the Strong Arm. He’s probably the last power of the Elks Clan.”

The black-haired swordsman from the Red King Clan had his mouth hidden by a muffler. His aura was so sharp it seemed he could kill with killing intent alone.

The black-haired swordsman, Shunrai, glanced at the man clad in black for a moment before looking back at the man fighting like a savage lion.

“No wonder the assassins couldn’t finish him off.”

“...Weren’t you the one who said to inform you if we find a strong foe?”

The assassin from Webrus’ Dagger was implying that they simply chose not to finish him off.

Shunrai wielded his scimitar on his shoulder and snorted.

“Have the small fries withdraw. Everything within my reach will be cut.”

For a moment, a fierce smile could be seen through his muffler.

The assassin narrowed his eyes and gave the signal for the lower members to change their encirclement.

“...Are you certain?” A voice from the shadows asked.

The assassin nodded. “If he fails, then that’s that. Besides, I want to put the Red King Clan in my debt.”

“As you command.”

Like the sea parting, a path opened up before Shunrai. At the end of that path was a man covered in both the blood of his foes and his own. He had buried countless foes with his axe, but its blade was already worn out and coagulated

blood could even be seen sticking on it.

“You...” Ryutanu exhaled as he glared at the swordsman before him.

Shunrai replied with a sharp glare of his own. “The name is Shunrai. I’ve come to this lands in search of the strong.”

Shunrai fixed his grip on his scimitar and lowered his center of gravity.

“Name yourself and that shall be considered your last words.”

Ryutanu recognized the black haired swordsman who named himself Shunrai. He was a warrior responsible for slaying many of his fleeing comrades.

“Die!”

Ryutanu swung his axe in anger, but Shunrai dodged it as if he were dancing, then Shunrai took a step in, and with the scimitar over his shoulder – a scimitar that could easily cut iron by itself, and with Shunrai’s skill anything, be it black steel or diamond – slashed toward Ryutanu.

Unfortunately, Ryutanu’s stance did not break even after missing with his axe, and he immediately punched toward Shunrai with his tekko[1].

“Ho.”

Both of those attacks were brimming with fury. Ryutanu’s axe missed, but the attack he sent with his tekko cracked the earth. Although it was only a little, seeing that made Shunrai raise his brows.

“The anger is real, but... you haven’t lost your calm, huh.” Shunrai smiled in admiration and jumped back.

The fact that he was able to make such a big gap between him and Ryutanu made it apparent that he was no small fry.

But Ryutanu couldn’t withdraw from this fight. Behind were the remaining members of the Elks Clan. No matter how strong the enemy, he had to keep on fighting.

As he gradually closed in on the enemy, he suddenly accelerated and yelled. “Don’t look down on the commanding officer of the Elks Clan’s shock corps!”

Sounds of metals clanging resounded and sparks erupted like the buzzing of

the dark of the night.

“...Hmm. As expected, that swordsman isn’t normal.”

While the two warriors fought each other, the assassin from before calmly watched them and analyzed their respective prowess. Ever since forming an alliance with the Red King Clan, the Dagger of Webrus has had many opportunities to see the strength of the Red King Clan up close.

The Red King Clan was a large organization with many clans under it, but despite that, the adventurers under Brandika’s direct control had a might far beyond their peers. The assassin has already seen their strength many times, but he still can’t help but be shocked each time.

Being afraid of the assassin clans or the mid-sized clans was normal for weaklings.

Fighting an enemy head on would result in many casualties, but if an assassin were to be used instead to knock down the center pillar of the opposing organization, one could effectively neutralize it. That was exactly how the Dagger of Webrus operated.

From the assassin’s perspective, the weakness of the Elks Clan was their lack of members and a person powerful enough to move them away from a beaten track. Even their clan leader, Touri, was only at the level of a human.

But the person fighting before his very eyes now felt like someone who has abandoned his humanity. It was both enviable and hateful, but the assassin would never show those emotions on his face.

Although the Elks Clan did not have a warrior possessing absolute strength among their ranks, they still managed to champion over a couple of fights in the east. They owed that to their leadership and efficient application of what little power they had.

It was an organization that inspired strong trust from its members, making it difficult to create a traitor within. Gathering information was difficult too. If the Dagger of Webrus could just find out the situation inside, they would surely find a way in, but alas... Another extreme example is the Red King Clan that had many clans under it.

Because of the above reason, as far as Webrus' Dagger was concerned, the Elks Clan was their nemesis.

But one day, something happened and for some reason, the efficiency that the Elks Clan was so proud of suddenly dulled. Webrus' Dagger never let their guard down around them, so as soon as that slight change in balance appeared, they knew.

The Elks Clan fought with the Red King Clan in that state, and obviously, they lost.

"The Elks Clan is over."

As Ryutanu the Strong Arm fell, the swordsman, Shunrai, wielded his blood-smeared scimitar over his shoulder.

As the assassin muttered to himself, he suddenly heard the sound of laughter accompanied by screams. With his heightened hearing, he could tell whose screams those belonged to. It was his men.

"The remnants?"

But why now? He asked himself, but no answer came, only the sight of blood splattering from one corner of their encirclement as his comrades fled for their lives.

[1] – [CLICK HERE TO SEE A TEKKO, NO THIS IS NOT A REFERRAL LINK](#)

"Ahaha! This is good! There's so many to pick from!"

Laughter sounded as blood spurted about. Each time Vine swung her sword, screams would sound and corpses would rise.

"...Clan leader, your bad habit is showing."

The gnome warrior, Berk, frowned, but he continued to support Vine from afar, shooting down the foes that entered Vine's blind spot with his magic.

The sharpened rocks were difficult to dodge in the dark of the night, but worse than that was the fact that even if one did manage to dodge them, the only thing waiting for them was Vine's evil blade.

All that the eye could see, all that the blade could reach, all were dragged into the depths of the abyss by the evil blade of the Red Moon's clan leader.

"Die! Die! Die! Ahahaha!"

"The clan leader's opened a path. Now, go!"

At Berk's behest, Pale ran straight ahead.

"Shurei, Rue, cover me."

Pale used her senses to find her foes within the dark of the night and shot at them with her small bow. With every arrow nocked, screams would resound. This was the skill of the sylph that surpassed even the precision of Berk's rock bullets.

"Hah?"

While Vine was happily cutting one person down after another, something managed to stop her, causing her to cry out in displeasure. As sparks flashed in the dark of the night, it became apparent that the one who stopped her was none other than the eastern swordsman who had named himself Shunrai.

"You look like you're having fun. How about partnering with me?"

"Don't put on airs around me! I'll tear you into pieces!"

Vine shook off the flesh bits and blood clinging to her blade, then she sheathed it, smiled fiercely, and rushed up to the eastern swordsman.

In response, Shunrai slightly inclined his scimitar over his shoulders and lowered his gravity, allowing him to move anytime he wished.

For a moment, there was silence between them.

But it was only for a moment.

"SEI!" [1]

"SHAA!" [1]

And in the next moment, Shunrai and Vine cried out, sparks erupting as their blades crossed. When they saw that they failed to kill their foe, they swung their swords once more.

Vine's evil blade grazed Shunrai's nose, while Shunrai's scimitar cut several strands of Vine's long black hair.

Vine was shorter compared to Shunrai, so she aimed for his feet, but Shunrai didn't show any intention of defending his feet as he took a step in and prepared to cut down Vine from above.

Vine clicked her tongue as she sensed death, then she brought back her sword and – relying on her instincts – jumped to the side to avoid the descending blade.

In response, Shunrai swept with his sword, releasing an attack that was akin to a powerful wind. If that were to hit, Vine's head would surely burst like a pomegranate, but as revenge for earlier, Vine jumped over his head instead.

In a contest of swords, one stakes his life in a moment. Sword technique, strength, vision, guts, speed... Even if one's opponent surpasses oneself on all accounts, one must never doubt his sword, for to do so, is to accept defeat.

Which is why these two warriors have been keeping a firm hold on their spirit while focusing on the battle.

“!”

When Shunrai's muffler was cut, the fierce smile hidden behind was finally revealed.

“What are you smiling for!?”

Veins bulged on Vine's temples as she took a step forward, then as she unsheathed her blade, she sent an attack toward the eastern swordsman. It was a blood curling sight when her graceful features were covered in blood and twisted in that ghastly expression.

Shunrai received her attack directly with his own scimitar and laughed.

“Good, good! Give me more! Hee hee.”

“Hah!?”

As fury burned within Vine's eyes, she pushed back the scimitar with all of her strength, and when a big enough gap was made, she swept with her sword to claim Shunrai's neck. But as Shunrai pulled back, the smile on his face did not

vanish, and as he opened his eyes wide in excitement, he mimicked Vine.

Vine clicked her tongue upon seeing Shunrai's eccentric behavior, and she sheathed her curved sword once more.

"I'll kill you." Vine spat.

"Kill me? Saying stuff like that repeatedly only makes you look weak, little girl." Shunrai spat back.

Vine had always had a short fuse, so it comes to no surprise that when she heard those words, she immediately lost all constraint. She smiled a sublime smile, but her eyes weren't laughing. Instead they emitted a powerful killing intent as she eyed the enemy before her.

"Go!"

As soon as that word was spoken, Pale ran past Vine, and Vine approached Shunrai to keep him from chasing after Pale, but Shunrai didn't even glance at Pale and instead focused on Vine.

It was such a perfect decision that Vine couldn't help but click her tongue. Vine had originally intended to take his head if he tried to go after Pale or showed even a little hesitation, but alas...

Shunrai knew that Pale only wanted to go where Ryutanu was. But as far as he was concerned, the living was more interesting than someone about to die, so he instinctively moved for Vine.

In the dark of the night, the battle of the crazed warriors was yet to end.



"Ryutanu!"

Pale couldn't hear anything anymore as she ran. Not the battle occurring nearby nor the enemies nor her allies, nothing. The only thing she could focus on was her old friend, whom she embraced despite his bloodied body. Beside her was Ryutanu's aide, the little girl that was hiding in the shed, looking like she was about to cry.

As Ryutanu faintly opened his eyes and breathed weakly, Pale swallowed her breath.

“... Tha...t’s... rea...lly... cru..el... Wh, y?”

Ryutanu’s eyes were filled with tears as he looked up at Pale.

Pale thought he was blaming her, so she never stopped apologizing as she embraced him.

“I’m, sorry. If, I hadn’t left for the forest.... you, I...”

Ryutanu shook his head. Just speaking alone was already difficult for him and his arms couldn’t move well, but despite that, he still desperately tried to wipe away the tears on Pale’s eyes.

“Prin... cess...”

“It’s alright. It’ll be alright... That’s why, Ryutanu!”

“Sophi...”

Even just breathing was difficult. Ryutanu’s voice was already powerless.

“Yes! Elder Brother!”

Sophia wiped away her tears and held Ryutanu’s hands.

“Dism...iss... Elks... Live... as you... please...”

“No, no, elder brother! We will... always...”

“Princ...ess... Please... take... care... of... these...”

Ryutanu couldn’t even finish that last sentence.

“No, you’re joking, right? Ryutanu... Ryutanu!”

Pale openly cried while Sophia quietly cried. Shurei and Rue were protecting them, but that wouldn’t last forever. Rue did not have the power to resurrect the dead and Shurei was outside of his area of expertise.

But the ones most annoyed by this odd turn of events was the assassins surrounding them.

While the swordsman from the Red King Clan and the black-haired woman were fighting, they were done in by some women and children. That fact greatly hurt their clan’s pride, a clan that had crushed the Elks Clan.

“How long are you planning to let these women and children run over you!?”

Openly furious, the assassin ordered his members to attack Pale and the remnants of the Elks Clan. Shurei readied to defend Pale and Sophia, while Berk attacked the Dagger of Webrus from afar.

It was frustrating being hit with those rock bullets in the middle of the forest, so the assassins clicked their tongues and went after the source of the rocks.

A closer look would reveal that the rocks had been shooting from the same place all this time.

Several people had been done in as they closed in, but Berk figured Shurei would probably be able to handle them so long as they blocked the rocks.

Having decided that, Berk decided to make his appearance.

“I’ll make you regret for making an enemy out of Webrus’ Dagger,” the assassin declared, thinking Berk was hiding deep inside the forest.

But then a voice suddenly replied.

“I wonder,” it said.

The assassin turned around in shock, and lo and behold, the gnome warrior was right there behind him.

“Why, are you... How did you get here!? You were over there!”

“Hmm... You mean this?”

As the rock bullet floated in the air, it flew to one direction, then it drew a curve and shot out from the same location as before, blowing away another assassin from Webrus’ Dagger’s ranks.

“It’s a game we play back in my hometown. Looks like it was pretty useful this time around.”

“Bastard!”

The assassin jumped back in a panic, but Berk didn’t allow him to, and before he could, his body was cut in half.

“Hmm... What are you supposed to say at a time like this again?”

Berk leisurely thought himself like that as he took a breather.

“Berk Alsen has taken the enemy general’s head!!”

When that voice resounded throughout the forest, the members of Webrus’ Dagger cried and scattered about like frightened baby spiders.

[1] Battle cries. Doesn’t really mean anything.

The twin red moons of Ervi and Navi shone upon Pale’s eyelids.

“Ah, ahh...”

The eyes that were closed by her brethren gradually opened as the moonlight goddess, Vardina, bestowed Pale her blessing.

But ironically the first thing those eyes saw was the hopeless sight of a comrade’s lifeless body.

“AHh, AHH!! Ryutanu!”

That nostalgic face was wet with blood, his body was covered in blood. How long had he been fighting? It was no longer even possible to distinguish whose blood it was that covered him anymore. Was it his or his foe’s, no one knew, but much of the blood had already dried.

“Why... Why?”

Why was this cruel world so quick to take the things she cherished? Pale wondered, but no answer came.

“Ahh, too late, eh?” A friendly voice called out to Pale.

It was none other than Vine, who was fighting with that eastern swordsman just a while ago.

Her overly lax attitude caused Pale to glare at her.

“What, got a problem?”

But Vine just laughed as if she didn’t mind Pale’s glare.

“Unfortunately, there’s no point in glaring at me. The one who killed that was Webrus’ Dagger and you not making it in time was your own fault. As someone who offered you assistance, there shouldn’t be any reason for you to be glaring at me.”

Pale swallowed the emotions that sought to well up.

She didn't think she was wrong, so she averted her gaze.

"Hmph. Well if you have enough self-control to keep yourself from yelling at others, then I guess that's good. So, what are we going to do now?"

"...Now?"

Around them was the river of blood and corpses that Vine, Berk, and the girls had made.

"You want vengeance, right?"

"That's..."

Within Pale burned the flames of hate. It was an emotion that demanded she consume everything or go insane. It was her first time feeling such emotions.

"The real enemy isn't the Dagger of Webrus. Behind them is the Red King."

Sophia wiped her eyes and then glared at Pale and Vine.

"The Red King..." Pale muttered in blank amazement.

"Heh..." Vine nodded.

"What's your name?" Pale asked.

Pale Symphoria gazed at the darkness within her heart, and the abyss gazed right back at her. What reflected on those beautiful pair of jewels she had for eyes was her own body being burned by the black flames of vengeance.

"Sophia," the girl replied.

"Ms. Sophia... I intend to exact vengeance on the Dagger of Webrus and the Red King. Would you like to come with me?"

Sophia wordlessly nodded, and so did the rest of the remnants of the Elks Clan.

"Ms. Vine."

"Yes?"

"Shurei, Rue... There won't be any coming back after this."

“I-It’s better than abandoning our comrades!” Shurei replied

Rue nodded.

“From now on you’ll be following my orders. Mark my words, the Dagger of Webrus and the Red King will pay!”

The shadow of the Goddess of Vengeance appeared within Pale, and she was aware of it.



Status

Name	Pale Symphoria
Race	Sylph
Level	89
Class	Commander
Possessed	Seal Ether; Deep Schemes; Inscrutable Stratagem; A Tactician's Wit; Bravery;
Skills	Wind's Voice; Magic Manipulation; Bow Master B+; Wind's Voice; Glorious Race
Divine	Wind
Protection	
Attributes	Blessing of the Goddess of Vengeance

Seal Ether

A skill that seals the targets ether. Can be casted with a special arrow.

Deep Schemes

Affects a tactician’s abilities.

Inscrutable Stratagem

Affects a tactician’s abilities.

A Tactician’s Wit

Aids one when leading an organization.

Magic Manipulation

A more advanced version of ether manipulation. Spells can be used with more efficiency.

Bravery

Allows one to regain calm when in a crisis.

Wind's Voice

Increases one's ability to grasp the surrounding area. Allows one to live normally even while blind.

Glorious Race

Due to being an elf, humans will be charmed to some extent.

Blessing of the Goddess of Vengeance

Charm effect to those close to the dark attribute.